CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

FRIDAY ▸ FEBRUARY 6, 2026 ▸ VOL: 11 ▸ ISSUE: 203 ▸ PAGES 12 ▸ ₹2.00

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A first since 2004: LS clears Prez speech sans PM's customary reply

In 2004, then PM Singh was prevented by BJP from speaking on Motion of Thanks to Prez's address

NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Thursday passed the Motion of Thanks on the President's address without the customary reply by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, amid vociferous protests by the opposition.

The incident marks the first time since 2004 that the Motion of Thanks on the President's address has been cleared without a response from the Prime Minister. Only three MPs were able to deliver their speeches.

Meanwhile, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla put the opposition amendments to the Motion of Thanks to a vote, which were rejected. The Speaker then read out the Motion of Thanks to the President for her address to both Houses of Parliament on 28 January, which was passed by a voice vote, amid sloganeering by the opposition members.

What happened in 2004

This was the second time that the Prime Minister could not reply to the debate on the president's speech. In 2004, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh could not deliver his speech after the debate on the president's address as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) lawmakers protested the inclusion of allegedly tainted ministers in his Cabinet.

Modi was scheduled to reply to the debate on President Droupadi Murmu's speech in Lok Sabha on Wednesday. He dropped the plan as the Opposition continued the protests. Modi is set to reply to the debate in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday.

Requested PM not to come to House: Birla

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said that extraordinary steps were taken to avoid an alleged serious disruption in the House. Birla said, ".When the Prime Minister was supposed to respond to the President's address in the House, I received solid information that several Congress MPs could have created an unprecedented incident near the Prime Minister's chair. If such an incident had occurred, it would have torn apart the democratic traditions of the country. To prevent this, I requested the Prime Minister not to come to the House." According to the Speaker, the decision was guided by concerns over decorum and institutional dignity.

Modi govt has made up its mind to not allow LoPs to speak: Kharge

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the opposition parties walked out of the Rajya Sabha during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's reply to the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address as the government has made up its mind that both leaders of opposition (he and Rahul Gandhi) will not be allowed to speak either in the Lok Sabha or in the Rajya Sabha.

PM hiding behind speaker: Priyanka

Congress leader Priyanka Vadra alleged that PM Modi was "hiding behind" LS Speaker Om Birla and described the claim that there was any plan to hurt the PM as an "absolute lie". Her remarks came after Birla said in the LS that he had asked Modi not to come to the House to deliver his address.

'Scared of truth, sought refuge in lies'

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi responded to Modi's Rajya Sabha address, alleging that the PM was afraid of the truth and had taken refuge in lies. "So much panic just from a few questions? Modi ji was so afraid of the truth, he took refuge in lies. Well, he did what he thought was right," he said. The RS witnessed noisy scenes as Opposition MPs raised slogans and staged walkout while PM replied to the Motion of Thanks to the President's address.

16 killed in 'illegal' coal mine blast in Meghalaya

SHILLONG

At least 16 labourers were killed and several others are feared trapped after a powerful blast ripped through an allegedly illegal rat-hole coal mine in Meghalaya's East Jaintia Hills district on Thursday, triggering a large-scale rescue operation.

The incident occurred at a rat-hole coal mine in the Thangsku area earlier in the day. Meghalaya Director General of Police I Nongrang said 16 bodies had been recovered so far, but the total number of workers inside the mine at the time of the blast was yet to be confirmed.

"More people are feared trapped," she said, adding that rescue teams were continuing operations.

The explosion is suspected to have occurred during coal mining activity at the site, said East Jaintia Hills SP Vikash Kumar.

The mine was reportedly operating illegally, as rat-hole mining has been banned by the National Green Tribunal due to safety and environmental concerns. Authorities said a probe has been ordered to determine responsibility and identify those involved in running the mine.

Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma expressed grief over the loss of lives and assured that all possible assistance would be provided to the victims' families. The state government said strict action would be taken against those found violating mining regulations.

The incident has once again raised serious questions over the continued operation of illegal coal mines in Meghalaya despite repeated bans and court orders.

Mr. Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister

Shri D. K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister

INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR-2026

AGRICULTURE BEYOND PRODUCTION - EMPOWERING FARMERS

State Level Krishi Pandit / Krishi Prashasti Award Presentation Programme

February 06th - 08th
Tripuravasini, Palace Ground, Bengaluru

Inauguration: 6th February 2026 | Time: 11:00 AM

The program is being inaugurated by the Hon'ble Chief Minister in the presence of Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister and Hon'ble Agriculture Minister Shri N. Chaluvarayaswamy.

Inauguration
Shri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Govt. of Karnataka

Guest of Honour

Shri D. K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister, Govt. of Karnataka

Sushri. Shobha Karandlaje
Hon'ble Minister of State for Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Labour & Employment, Govt. of India

Presided By

Shri N. Chaluvarayaswamy
Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture, Govt. of Karnataka and Chairman, International Trade Fair - 2026

August Presence

Shri Ramalinga Reddy
Minister of Transport & Muzrai, Govt. of Karnataka

Shri Krishna Byregowda
Hon'ble Minister of Revenue, Govt. of Karnataka

Shri Shivanand Patil
Hon'ble Minister of Textile, Sugarcane Development & Sugar and Agricultural Marketing, Govt. of Karnataka

Shri S. S. Mallikarjun
Hon'ble Minister of Mines & Geology and Horticulture, Govt. of Karnataka

Shri K. Venkatesh
Hon'ble Minister of Animal Husbandry and Sericulture, Govt. of Karnataka

Shri R. Ashoka
Hon'ble Leader of Opposition, Karnataka Legislative Assembly

Shri Chalavadi T. Narayanaswamy
Hon'ble Leader of Opposition, Karnataka Legislative Council

Dr. Ashwath Narayana C. N.
Hon'ble Member of Karnataka Legislative Assembly, Malleshwaram Constituency

International Trade Fair - 2026 Highlights
- Exhibition
- Agroecology
- Value Addition
- Branding, Marketing and Credit Services
- Food Stalls
- Consumer Connect
- Cultural Programmes

ENTRY FREE

Opportunity for farmers to record and upload the crop details of their own land in the "Farmer Crop Survey Mobile App".

Crop Survey
Crop details can be uploaded with the help of local private residents/ Department Officials.

Crop survey information can be viewed and any discrepancies may be resolved by raising objections through "Bele Darshak App".

For more information, Contact " Farmers helpline - 18004253553".

Karnataka State Department of Agriculture, Seshadri Road, Bangalore - 560001.

QUICK READ

Cauvery water rates likely to rise from April

BENGALURU

After the recent hike in Namma Metro fares, residents may soon have to brace for higher Cauvery water tariffs as well. The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) is considering a three percent increase in water rates, in line with the recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Committee, which had suggested annual revisions of tariffs. Sources said the revised rates are likely to come into effect from April 1. In April last year, BWSSB had increased domestic water charges by a minimum of 0.15 paise per litre and up to 1 paise per litre, while commercial consumers saw a steeper hike of up to 1.90 paise per litre.

BMCRI Director summoned over Victoria Hospital digital payment scam

BENGALURU

In the wake of allegations surrounding a ₹23-lakh digital payment scam at Victoria Hospital, Medical Education Minister Sharan Prakash Patil summoned Dr S.T. Kavya, Director-cum-Dean of Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute (BMCRI), and directed her to address the issue promptly. Dr Kavya has been asked to oversee the inquiry already ordered under Dr S. Deepak, Medical Superintendent of Victoria Hospital. An FIR has been registered at the V.V. Puram police station based on a complaint filed by Dr Deepak. Eight contract employees have been named as accused in the case, of whom a few have already resigned. All suspects will be summoned for questioning by both the internal inquiry committee and the police as investigations continue.

Fake bomb threat sent to Italian embassy

BENGALURU

A fake bomb threat has once again triggered alarm in the city after miscreants sent a threatening email to the Italian Embassy near Halasuru. The email, received on January 30 and discovered later, warned of an explosion involving five RDX bombs. Following the threat, the Italian Consulate's Security Manager, Geodomenico O Milano, lodged a complaint with the Halasuru police. A case has been registered and investigations are underway to trace the source of the email. Police have termed the threat as prima facie false but said all security protocols were followed as a precaution.

Bellandur lake buzz sparks questions in Bengaluru

Residents report round-the-clock machinery, fuelling suspicious activity

BENGALURU

Heavy movement of earthmovers and trucks around Bellandur Lake over the past few days has triggered concern and speculation among residents living in the surrounding areas. The round-the-clock activity, involving JCBs, Hitachi excavators and tipper lorries, has raised questions over whether restoration work is underway or if there is a possibility of encroachment within the lake precincts.

Locals say the machinery has been operating not only during the day but also late into the night, creating constant noise and unease. Several residents claimed they were not informed about the nature of the work, leading to suspicions that illegal activity or real estate-related operations could be taking place inside the lake area.

Some residents further alleged that loud sounds resembling explosions were heard at night, fuelling fears of possible blasting. Posts and videos circulated on social media questioning the sudden activity at the lake added to the confusion and public mistrust.

However, officials have categorically denied all allegations of encroachment, blasting or any unlawful activity. Authorities clarified that the work is part of an ongoing Bellandur Lake rejuvenation project, being executed at an estimated cost of ₹179 crore under the directions of the National Green Tribunal (NGT).

According to officials, extensive desilting is currently underway to remove years of accumulated sludge from the lake bed as part of ecological restoration efforts. In addition, a 1-kilometre-long and 24-metre-wide road is being developed along the Bellandur Lake bund road. This road will connect the Ejipura Outer Ring Road with the Sarjapur Outer Ring Road and is expected to ease traffic congestion in the area.

Officials explained that the work is being carried out continuously, including night shifts, to ensure that desilting and road construction are completed before the onset of the monsoon. This, they said, accounts for the heavy machinery movement and noise at odd hours.

While authorities insist that the project is strictly focused on lake rejuvenation and infrastructure improvement, residents say they will remain vigilant. Many have emphasised that while development is necessary, any form of encroachment or misuse of lake land must be prevented and dealt with firmly.

Police to conduct drive to identify foreign nationals staying illegally: HM

BENGALURU

Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara on Thursday said the State police have been directed to conduct a comprehensive drive to identify Bangladeshi nationals and other foreign citizens staying illegally across Karnataka. The move, he said, is aimed at ensuring internal security and enforcing immigration laws strictly.

Speaking to reporters, Parameshwara said there were several claims regarding the number of illegal foreign nationals in the State, with figures varying widely. "Some people claim that there are nearly 20 lakh illegal Bangladeshi nationals in Karnataka. However, according to official records, around 370 people have been deported so far. Whatever the actual number may be, anyone staying illegally must be identified and deported as per the law," he said.

The Home Minister noted that data available with the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) in Bengaluru does not indicate the presence of a very large number of illegal foreign nationals. "Even so, if anyone is staying without valid documents, action has to be taken. That is why a statewide drive has been ordered," he added.

In a parallel move to curb illegal drug manufacturing, Parameshwara said police have also been instructed to identify chemical factories operating within Karnataka, particularly in urban areas. Officials have been asked to document their locations, verify trade licences and closely monitor their activities. "Police have already begun collecting details about chemical factories—what they manufacture and whether they have valid licences. This exercise is crucial to prevent misuse of chemicals for illegal activities," he said, adding that inspections would be intensified within the Bengaluru Police Commissionerate limits.

The minister also said the Home Department has prepared its demands for the upcoming State budget, including recruitment, new police stations and infrastructure upgrades, which will be submitted to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

K C Venugopal's birthday marked by social service initiatives in Bengaluru

BENGALURU

Senior Congress leader and Alappuzha MP K C Venugopal's birthday was observed through a series of social service initiatives across Bengaluru, underscoring a message of public service and compassion.

Karnataka State Bioenergy Development Board Chairman and Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) Vice-President S E Sudheendra participated in the celebrations and inaugurated day-long programmes organised on behalf of the Government of Karnataka and the KPCC. The main event was held at the Sri Mahalakshmi Senior Citizens Day Wellness Centre, Orphanage and Old Age Home in Basaveshwaranagar, where the occasion was marked through welfare-oriented activities rather than formal festivities.

Speaking on the occasion, Sudheendra described Venugopal as his mentor and expressed gratitude for his inclusive leadership style, organisational acumen and strong commitment to pro-people ideals. He thanked Venugopal for appointing him as KPCC Vice-President and as a member of the All-India Congress Committee (AICC), noting that Venugopal has emerged as a key organisational force within the Congress, strengthening the party at the grassroots across the country through disciplined work culture and focused leadership.

Sudheendra also highlighted Venugopal's contributions in various roles, including as Alappuzha Lok Sabha MP, Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, Minister of State for Civil Aviation during the UPA-II government, Rajya Sabha member, and AICC General Secretary and State In-charge. He said Venugopal enjoys the confidence of senior Congress leaders, including Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge and Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

As part of the celebrations, Venugopal engaged directly in social service activities. He personally served breakfast to elderly residents and children in the morning, while lunch was arranged for destitute parents at the Visveswarapuram circle of the orphanage later in the day. Birthday greetings were exchanged, with speakers wishing him continued guidance and contribution to Karnataka's development.

Similar programmes were organised at Devanahalli, Indiranagar, Rakum School for Blind Students, Basavanagudi, Koramangala and other locations. Congress leaders and party workers from Rajajinagar and Mahalakshmipuram, along with former IT Cell chief Niranjan Rao and several supporters, participated in the events.

Allied health sciences interns at BMCRI protest, demand stipend

BENGALURU

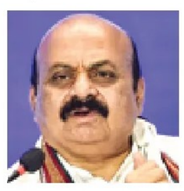
Interns of BSc Allied Health Sciences (AHS) at the Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute (BMCRI) staged a protest on the campus, demanding payment of a stipend during their compulsory internship period.

The students said AHS courses require three years of academic study followed by a mandatory one-year internship, during which interns perform full-time clinical duties. These include assisting in patient care, handling diagnostic procedures, and working night shifts, often for 8 to 12 hours a day. Despite carrying responsibilities comparable to other clinical interns, they alleged that AHS interns at BMCRI are not paid any stipend, causing severe financial strain and mental stress.

The protesters also highlighted the lack of access to government hostel facilities, which forces many interns to stay in expensive private accommodations. They further claimed that several government-mandated norms for AHS courses — such as the appointment of separate faculty, adequate infrastructure, and dedicated academic buildings — are not being properly implemented at the institute. In a press note, the students pointed out that AHS interns in other government institutions.

India–US agreements mark historic milestone: MP Basavaraj Bommai

BENGALURU



Former Chief Minister and MP Basavaraj Bommai said the agreements reached between India and the United States under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump mark a historic step in strengthening ties between the world's two largest democracies.

In a post on X, Bommai said Prime Minister Modi's strong and decisive leadership has played a key role in safeguarding India's national interests on the global stage. He noted that the Prime Minister has effectively leveraged international opportunities to advance India's overall development and global standing.

Expressing appreciation, Bommai said he was grateful to Prime Minister Modi and his team for achieving what he described as an important diplomatic milestone that would have long-term benefits for the country.

He further stated that the agreements between the two nations would open up new global opportunities for Indian farmers, small and medium enterprises, start-ups, and skilled professionals.

8 Yrs of Sustained Success: NCC Legacy at CHRIST University

BENGALURU

At dawn on the parade ground, before lectures begin and hostels fully wake up, a small group of students fall into formation. Their uniforms are crisp, movements precise, and voices steady. For the cadets of CHRIST (Deemed to be University)'s National Cadet Corps, this discipline is not an extracurricular obligation, rather, it is a way of life. It is this steady, often unseen commitment that has earned the University the Best Institution Award for the eighth consecutive year under the Karnataka and Goa NCC Directorate under the Army Wing.

The legacy of NCC at CHRIST runs as deep as the institution itself. Established in 1969, the same year the University was founded, the NCC unit has grown alongside generations of students who chose service before spectacle. Over the decades, it has produced more than 100 officers for the Indian Armed Forces, while continuing to train over 200 cadets each year. For many, NCC is not just a pathway to a uniformed career but a formative space where leadership, resilience, and responsibility are learned early.

The training year 2025–26 reflected this enduring culture. Cadets from CHRIST represented the Directorate at some of the most demanding national platforms, including the Republic Day Camp in New Delhi and the Thal Sainik Camp. Medals were won, camps were conquered, and peaks were climbed in more ways than one, with 39 cadets summiting Mt. Shinkula at over 18,000 feet. Yet, within the Unit, these achievements are spoken of not as personal victories but as collective milestones.

What sets the CHRIST NCC experience apart is the balance between excellence and service. Alongside national camps and military training, cadets led 19 social awareness initiatives during the year, addressing environmental conservation, health, and civic responsibility. Whether cleaning lakes, organising health drives, or engaging communities, cadets carry the NCC ethos beyond campus gates.

Lingayat MLAs meet to discuss community interests: MB Patil

BENGALURU

Minister for Large Industries and senior Lingayat leader MB Patil said a meeting of Congress Lingayat MLAs was held recently with the sole objective of protecting and promoting the interests of the community, dismissing speculation about leadership issues or personal agendas.

Speaking to media persons at the Vidhana Soudha, Patil said it was normal for legislators belonging to various communities to meet periodically to discuss issues concerning their respective groups. "There was no leadership question or hidden agenda behind the meeting. Such interactions are a routine part of political life," he clarified.

Patil noted that the Lingayat community is the largest community in Karnataka and plays a significant role in the state's political landscape. In the last Assembly elections, the Congress had fielded 57 Lingayat candidates, of whom 34 were elected.

HYGIENE PROBLEM

Pigeon menace inside metro stations triggers health concerns

BENGALURU

The presence of pigeon waste inside Yelachenahalli Metro station has sparked serious hygiene and public health concerns among Bengaluru metro commuters, with many fearing respiratory infections, skin allergies and aggravated asthma conditions.

Commuters have reported finding pigeon feathers, wings, droppings and other bird waste on the metro tracks and within station premises. The accumulation of waste has reportedly led to a persistent foul smell inside the station, making daily travel uncomfortable, particularly during peak hours when footfall is high.

Photographs showing pigeon droppings and feathers scattered along the tracks at Yelachenahalli station have gone viral on social media, intensifying public concern and drawing attention to the issue. Passengers say the stench inside the station is hard to ignore and raises questions about sanitation standards in enclosed public transport spaces.

Health experts have warned that prolonged exposure to pigeon waste can pose serious health risks. Dust from pigeon droppings and feathers, when inhaled, can cause respiratory infections, lung-related illnesses, skin allergies and, in severe cases, hypersensitivity pneumonitis — a potentially serious inflammatory lung condition.

Medical professionals caution that individuals exposed to such conditions may experience breathing difficulties, skin rashes, chest discomfort, fever and lung infections. People with pre-existing respiratory conditions, particularly asthma patients, are considered highly vulnerable, as exposure could trigger frequent and severe asthma attacks.

The concerns are amplified as metro stations are enclosed environments where commuters often spend significant time waiting for trains. Several passengers have demanded immediate action from metro authorities to prevent pigeons from nesting inside stations and along rail tracks.

Meanwhile, the Urban Development Department has imposed restrictions on feeding pigeons in public spaces across Bengaluru.

QUICK READ

Gadag invites applications for Sarvottam Seva

GADAG

State government officers and employees can now submit nominations online for the 2026 State Level Sarvottam Seva Award. Applicants must submit separate nominations for each award level if applying for multiple categories. Nominations can be submitted in Kannada or English following government instructions, using the websites https://dparar.karnatak.gov.in or https://sarvothamaawards.karnatak.gov.in. For Kannada entries, officials recommend using only Nudi 6.0. The last date for submissions is February 25. For assistance or more information, applicants may contact the District Collector's Office. Authorities encourage eligible candidates to apply promptly and recognize outstanding public service, highlighting commitment and excellence in government work across the state.

Koppal school hosts child rights awareness program

KOPPAL

An awareness program on child rights and laws was held at Educare English Medium High School, Koppal, in collaboration with the District Child Protection Unit, Child Helpline, Police, Health Department, and Abhinava Sri Siddeshwara Welfare Organization. Students learned about child protection, safety, adolescence changes, hygiene, and laws including the POCSO Act and prevention of child marriage. Guidance was given on helpline numbers 1098 and ERSS 112, and safe touch-unsafe touch. Key officials present included District Child Protection Officer Mahantaswamy Pujara, Taluk Health Education Officer Gangamma Kalasapura, police representatives, and school staff. The program aimed to empower children with knowledge and safety awareness.

Koppal offers walk-in interview for youth

KOPPAL

Tiger Capital Pvt. Ltd., near Tikotikar Petrol Bunk, Koppal, will conduct a walk-in interview on February 12 from 9 am to 1 pm for the position of Relationship Manager. The recruitment covers Koppal, Kushtagi, Yelaburga, Kuknoor, and Gangavathi taluks. Unemployed youth aged 18 to 30 with any degree are eligible. Applicants should bring two attested copies of educational certificates, Aadhaar card, resume, and two passport-sized photos. Attendance is free, with no fees. For details, candidates can contact the District Employment Exchange Center, First Floor, District Administration Building, Koppal. The initiative aims to provide employment opportunities for local youth.

Bengaluru–Pune bullet train plan gains momentum

Patil thanked Union Ministers for raising the issue with the Railway Minister, urging swift implementation, emphasizing it's about development, not politics

HUBBALLI

Karnataka Infrastructure Development Minister M.B. Patil has welcomed fresh discussions on a proposed high-speed rail corridor connecting Bengaluru, Pune and Mumbai, calling it a major boost for regional growth.

Patil thanked Union Ministers Pralhad Joshi and H.D. Kumaraswamy for taking up the matter with Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw. He said the project should move beyond talks and be implemented quickly, adding that it is not a political issue but one linked to development.

He noted that strong rail connectivity between Bengaluru, known as India's technology hub, and Mumbai, the financial capital, would benefit central and north Karnataka as well as parts of Maharashtra. Cities like Tumakuru, Davanagere, Hubballi, Belagavi and others could see economic and industrial growth if the corridor becomes reality.

Patil said he had raised the demand soon after the Union Budget, which announced several high-speed rail routes in the country. While welcoming other projects, he stressed that a Bengaluru–Pune–Mumbai link would directly help many interior regions.

He added that letters have already been sent to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Railway Minister Vaishnaw seeking approval for the corridor.

Meanwhile, Union Minister Pralhad Joshi confirmed that he personally met the Railway Minister and received a positive response.

If approved, the corridor is expected to improve travel speed, business links and overall infrastructure development across large parts of Karnataka and neighbouring Maharashtra.

MP resolves Chad visa crisis for tribals

DAVANAGERE

Dr. Mallikarjun acted immediately, contacting Dr. S. Jaishankar and the Indian Embassy, which ensured all eight visas would be renewed without penalty, relieving affected families.

Davanagere Member of Parliament Dr. Prabha Mallikarjun has successfully resolved the visa issue of eight members of the Hakkipikki community from Karnataka who were stranded in the African nation of Chad. Speaking to the media on Thursday, the MP said two people from Davanagere district, five from Shivamogga district, and one from Chikkamagaluru district were facing serious difficulties after their visas expired. They were under the threat of arrest and unable to return home safely.

Dr. Mallikarjun said she took immediate action after learning about their situation. He wrote to Union External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar and also contacted the Indian Embassy in Chad, requesting urgent help for the affected individuals.

Following this intervention, officials from the Indian Embassy responded positively. They assured that the visas of all eight people would be renewed without imposing any penalty, providing major relief to the community members and their families. The MP said the quick response helped prevent further hardship and ensured the safety of the stranded citizens. He added that the government remains committed to protecting Indians abroad and responding swiftly during emergencies.

Families of the Hakkipikki community members expressed relief and gratitude, saying the timely effort brought hope during a difficult and uncertain period for everyone involved.

HIDDEN CAMERA BLACKMAIL CASE: THREE ARRESTED

BELAGAVI

City police have arrested three men for allegedly blackmailing a woman using a secretly recorded private video, and demanding Rs 50 lakh.

One of the accused is said to be a Right to Information activist. The other two are from Gokak taluk. Police said the trio posed as media persons and threatened to share the video on social media and news platforms.

According to investigators, the men entered the woman's house when she was away. They allegedly used a spare key, fixed a hidden camera inside a light holder, and later returned the key without her knowledge. After recording the footage, the accused contacted the woman and demanded money to keep the video private. She then approached Malamaruti police station and filed a complaint. Police registered a case under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Information Technology Act. During the operation, officers seized mobile phones, memory devices, hidden cameras, and a car believed to be used by the accused. City Police Commissioner Bhushan Borase said further investigation is underway to find out if others were involved. He urged citizens to report any form of online or video-based blackmail immediately.He also advised people to stay alert in private and public spaces, and to inform police if they suspect hidden cameras or digital misuse. Authorities said strong legal action will be taken against anyone involved in such crimes, which cause serious mental distress and violate personal privacy and safety. Police said efforts are on to trace the source who shared house details and to examine digital evidence collected from the seized devices for further proof.

Gadag honors legacy of Kumara Shivayogi AT Shivanubhava

GADAG

The 344th monthly commemoration of Sri Hanagalla Kumara Shivayogi was held at Sri Annapoorneshwari Mandir near Klugunda Naka, Gadag. The event celebrated his remarkable contributions in religious, social, educational, and industrial fields.

Smt. Veena Hemanthagouda Patil, writer and director of Chaitanya Education Institute, said Shivayogi was rare in the country. "He established a Shivayoga temple with great effort and founded the All India Veerashaiva Mahasabha to unite society," she said. She praised his work in promoting social harmony and supporting employment, including starting a ginning mill in Bagalkot.

Dr. Rajendra S., chairman of the Shivanubhava Committee, presided over the event. He noted that Kumara Shivayogi began social service at age 37 and achieved in 26 years what might take centuries for others. Vedamurthy Maheshwara Swamy, spiritual director of Sri Adavindraswamy Math, said Shivayogi's life and service set an example for today's Mathadhis.

The program began with the worship of Shivayogi's portrait, followed by floral tributes and a prayer song by Smt. Mangala Yanamashetty. G.M. Yanamashetty, former Shivanubhava Samiti president, welcomed the participants. Prakash Bandi, art lecturer, compered the program, and Siddanna Javali, treasurer, proposed the vote of thanks.

On the occasion, Basavaraja Palleda, Maruti, and real estate entrepreneur Srinivas Shankarasa Pawara, who managed the prasada service, were felicitated with Srimathadiya.

Several dignitaries and devotees attended, including Prof. K.H. Belur, B.M. Kassavali, Ningappa Baligara, L.S. Nilagunda, Gurappa Nidagundi, Geetha Hoogara, Dr. S.K. Nalavattawadamath, Smt. Pramiladevi Balegara, B.V. Sankanur, and members of Veereshwaraswamy Hosalli Math. The event reflected devotion, respect, and remembrance of Kumara Shivayogi's lifelong contributions to society.

Veerashaiva-Ishtalinga existed before Basava era

DHARWAD

The practice of Veerashaiva-Lingayat religion and the worship of Ishtalinga existed long before the 12th century, said USA-based writer and researcher Ravi Hanj. He visited the historic Amminabavi Samsthan Panchagruha Hiremath on Thursday and spoke about its significance. Ravi Hanj said some people wrongly claim that Veerashaiva-Lingayat religion began only in Basava's era. "Documents from this monastery show that the religion and Ishtalinga worship were present much earlier," he explained. A patronage document dated Shree Shalivahana Sheke 1131, or 816 years old, proves that the Samsthan Panchagruha Hiremath is over a thousand years old.

The monastery is a branch of Shree Rambhapuri Jagadguru Peetha, one of the five Panchapeeths of the Veerashaiva tradition. Ravi Hanj said all Panchapeeths have a long history, and their Jagadgurus have guided the Veerashaiva-Lingayat Dharma and inspired spiritual awakening for centuries.

During his visit, Ravi Hanj was honored by Shree Shantaliga Shivacharya Swamiji, the senior pontiff of Amminabavi Samsthan Panchagruha Hiremath. He was draped with a shawl, given the mantra, and blessed.

Writer Gurumoorty Yaragambalimath, journalist S.M. Prashant Rajguru, teacher Vinayak Hiremath, Veerayya Hiremath, Somalingashastri Guddadamath, and other devotees were present at the event.

Dr. Ullagaddi urged schools to identify student weaknesses, focus on struggling students, and provide remedial classes, tests, and revision sessions

Teachers focus on raising SSLC exam scores

GADAG

A special workshop was held in Gadag to help schools improve SSLC exam results. Dr. Eshwar Ullagaddi, Additional Commissioner of the School Education and Literacy Department, inaugurated the program and said teachers must work together to raise students' scores.

Dr. Ullagaddi asked schools to check subject-wise weaknesses of students and make a clear action plan. He said special attention should be given to students who are falling behind. Remedial classes, extra practice tests, and revision sessions should be organized to improve their learning.

He also told teachers to check answer sheets carefully to find mistakes and correct them. Continuous communication with parents is important to increase students' attendance. Schools were advised to use digital classrooms and smart teaching methods effectively to make learning easier and interesting for students.

Punctuality, dedication, and good teaching were highlighted as key factors in helping students succeed. Every school was instructed to prepare a result-based plan tailored to its students' needs.

Deputy Director R.S. Burudi welcomed the attendees and explained the workshop's purpose. Other officials present included Ishwara Nayak, Director of the Additional Commissioner's Office, Diet Pracharya G.M. Mudinamani, Assistant Director of Akshara Dasoha, field education officers, high school head teachers, and nodal officers. Dr. Ullagaddi said that improving SSLC results is not only the responsibility of principals but all teachers. The aim is to provide focused guidance, help weaker students catch up, and ensure all students get the support they need to perform well in exams. The workshop emphasized teamwork, smart planning, and consistent follow-up for better results.

FIGHT CANCER TOGETHER

CANCER AWARENESS RALLY MARKS WORLD CANCER DAY

KOPPAL

A public awareness march was organised at the premises of the old district hospital as part of World Cancer Day celebrations in Koppal, drawing students, health staff, and community members together for a common cause.

The event was jointly held by the District Administration, Zilla Panchayat, District Health and Family Welfare Department, the Non-Communicable Diseases Control wing, Indian Cancer Society, and Basavashri Paramedical College.

Speaking at the inauguration, District NCD Officer Dr. Prakash H. said the day aims to spread correct information about cancer and remove fear and myths linked to the disease. He explained that unhealthy lifestyle habits are a major reason for many cancers today.

He listed warning signs such as wounds that do not heal, unusual bleeding, long-lasting cough, painless lumps, and swelling. People noticing these symptoms should visit the nearest government hospital for early check-ups and treatment, he said. Taluk Health Officer Dr. Ramanjaneya said this year's message focuses on unity in fighting cancer. He added that HPV vaccination for girls aged nine to fourteen will be provided in government hospitals to prevent cervical cancer.

Students and health workers carried placards and raised slogans as the rally moved through the Central Bus Stand, main roads, and busy circles before returning to the hospital.

Doctors, ASHA workers, teachers, volunteers, and officials from several departments joined the march, urging families to eat healthy food, avoid tobacco and alcohol, and go for regular screening to build a cancer-free future for the next generation. Organisers said small lifestyle changes today can save lives tomorrow and promised to continue awareness drives across the district soon.

QUICK READ

Gadag hosts workshop for small business growth

GADAG

A one-day workshop on ZED and LEAN for micro, small, and medium entrepreneurs will be held on February 7 at M. Agadi College of Engineering & Technology, Lakshmeshwara. Organized jointly by the Department of Industries and Commerce, District Industrial Centre, Gadag, and Karnataka State Marketing Communication and Advertising Ltd., Bangalore, the event starts at 10 am. Key attendees include Lead Bank Manager Santosh M.V., District Skill Development Officer Mallura Basavaraj, Joint Director Prashantha Barigida, and retired Deputy Director Gopinath Rao. Assistant Director Somashekar Patil welcomed participants, emphasizing knowledge-sharing to boost business efficiency and growth in the local entrepreneurial community.

Gadag Lokayukta holds public relations meeting

GADAG

The Karnataka Lokayukta Gadag office will host a Public Relations Meeting and complaint-receiving program on Wednesday, February 11, from 10:30 am to 1:00 pm at the Tahsildar Office Sabha Bhavan in Rona. The initiative follows directions from the Additional Director General of Police, Karnataka Lokayukta, Bangalore, aiming to strengthen public interaction and transparency. Deputy Superintendent of Police Vijay Biradar shared details with local media, emphasizing that residents can raise grievances directly. Authorities encourage all citizens to participate and use this opportunity to report issues.

Gadag prepares for district deworming campaign

GADAG

The Health and Family Welfare Department will observe National Deworming Day on February 10, followed by Mop-Up Day on February 16 across Karnataka. Under this program, Albendazole tablets will be given to children aged 1 to 19 to ensure they are free from intestinal worms. District officials said the total target in Gadag is 3,28,643 children. Health workers will distribute tablets in schools and communities to reach every eligible child. Authorities urged parents to ensure participation. The campaign aims to improve child health, prevent infections, and promote overall well-being, reflecting the district's commitment to public health initiatives.

SBI launches Financial Literacy Week from Feb 9-13

KOPPAL

State Bank of India will organize a "Five-day Financial Literacy Week" from February 9 to 13 across Koppal district to raise awareness about banking and financial discipline. The program is being held under the guidance of the Department of Financial Services and the Reserve Bank of India. The week will be inaugurated by the District Administrator on February 9 with the release of official posters. A total of 188 bank branches across the district will host programs.

SR Patil reviews progress of state guarantees

Patil said schemes aim to empower poor families with dignity, stressing strict measures to prevent misuse and aid only eligible people

GADAG

State Guarantee Scheme Implementation Authority Vice President S.R. Patil urged officials to ensure that benefits of the government's five guarantee schemes reach even the most marginalized people in society. He spoke while chairing a district-level progress review meeting at the Zilla Panchayat Hall in Gadag on Thursday.

Patil said the schemes are designed to make poor families financially stronger and help them live with dignity and self-reliance. He stressed that strict steps must be taken to prevent misuse and to make sure only eligible people receive support.

Reviewing the Griha Lakshmi scheme, he said over 1.23 crore women across the state are receiving financial assistance. Officials were told to recover funds wrongly deposited in the accounts of deceased beneficiaries and return them to the government.

Patil also called for better cleanliness, seating, rest rooms, and toilets at bus stands for the comfort of passengers, especially women. He directed that information boards about the guarantee schemes be displayed at ration shops and other public places. A district-level beneficiaries' conference will be held on February 18, and officials were instructed to organize it in a grand and orderly manner. Separate stalls for each scheme, proper stage arrangements, invitations, and food facilities must be planned according to protocol, he said. District officials shared progress data, including thousands of beneficiaries under Griha Jyothi, Shakti travel benefits for women, Yuvanidhi payments to youth, and Annabhagya food grain distribution. Patil told officers that serving people with honesty and dedication is the true spirit of public service. He urged departments to work together so that no eligible family is left out of these welfare programmes across district.

Education empowers women, guides them to success

KOPPAL

Dr. Choudhary cautioned students that fraudsters on Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and short videos often trap young girls using fake friendships, emotional messages, and blackmail.

Dr. Nagalakshmi Choudhary, Chairperson of the Karnataka State Women's Commission, told college students that education is the greatest strength for women and the key to a successful and independent life.She was speaking at an interaction programme with students from across the district, organised by the Women's Commission along with the district administration, Zilla Panchayat, police department, and Women and Child Development Department. She said education gives knowledge about the world, rights, duties, and responsibilities. Every girl should focus on studies, avoid distractions, and understand that success comes only through hard work and dedication, not shortcuts.

Dr. Choudhary warned students to be careful while using social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, and short videos, as fraudsters often trap young girls through fake friendships, emotional messages, and blackmail.

She asked students not to accept requests from strangers and to seek help immediately by calling the cyber helpline 1930, child helpline 1098, or emergency police number 112 if they face online abuse or threats. Speaking about constitutional rights, she said many women are unaware of the protections and welfare schemes available to them, and encouraged students to learn about government systems and demand facilities when injustice occurs.

Students from different colleges raised issues about missing basic facilities in their areas and campuses, and the Chairperson directed officials present to look into the complaints and take necessary action quickly.

District Collector Dr. Suresh B. Itnal, Zilla Panchayat CEO Varnit Negi, Superintendent of Police Dr. Ram L. Arasiddi, and senior officers from various departments attended the programme along with lecturers and many students. Officials promised follow-up and continued support.

Health Rights March planned in Yadgir City

YADGIR

A "Health Right March" will be held in Yadgir on February 6, demanding free medicines in government hospitals and immediate implementation of the Right to Health Act in Karnataka.

The march is being organised by the Drug Action Forum along with several public organisations. It will begin at 11 am from Subhash Circle, said forum member Priyanka during a press conference at the District Patrika Bhawan.

Organisers said a large share of medical expenses for families is spent on buying medicines. They demanded that all essential medicines be provided free of cost in government hospitals. They also urged that doctors should not send patients to private pharmacies and that the government must ensure the quality of drugs supplied in hospitals.

Activists recalled deaths of mothers linked to poor-quality medicines at a Ballari hospital in December 2024. After protests in 15 districts last year, they said, there was no strong response from the government. This year, marches are being planned in all 31 districts. They pointed out that states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Rajasthan already run free medicine schemes. Though Karnataka set up a medical supplies corporation in 2013, they said it is not working effectively.

Speakers also demanded strict regulation of private hospital fees and opposed plans to hand over some district hospitals to private partners under a PPP model. They said health care is a basic right under the Constitution and must be equal for all, including the poor and vulnerable.

Several activists and leaders from social organisations attended the press meet and extended support to the march. Organisers urged citizens to join in large numbers.

Fake PhD claims rock Bagalkote colleges hiring

BAGALKOTE

Allegations have surfaced that several guest lecturers working in government degree colleges across Bagalkote district secured their posts using fake PhD certificates, raising serious concerns about recruitment practices. Officials say more than 100 guest lecturers are employed in 18 government colleges in the district. Complaints claim that nearly 60 percent of them submitted questionable doctoral degrees obtained from universities outside Karnataka. Some complainants allege that each fake certificate was purchased for three to four lakh rupees. Suspicious documents have reportedly been found in colleges at Jamkhandi, Hunagunda, and Mudhol, prompting calls for a detailed inquiry. One major red flag involves certificates said to be issued by Chaudhary Charan Singh University in Uttar Pradesh. The university reportedly has no Kannada department, yet PhD degrees in Kannada were submitted in its name, deepening doubts. The Education Department has begun verifying the authenticity of these certificates. Officials are examining documents submitted by guest lecturers appointed during the 2024-25 and 2025-26 academic years to determine whether any fraud occurred. If the allegations prove true, strict action could follow, including cancellation of appointments and possible legal proceedings.

Authorities seek public help locating missing boys

KOPPAL

The Koppal District Child Protection Unit has appealed to the public to help locate two missing boys, Dinesh (17 years, 1 month) and Kumaraswamy (16 years, 7 months). The boys, who were staying at Calvary Chapel's faith home for children in need, went missing at 9:45 am on January 8. Authorities suspect they may have been kidnapped.

A case has been registered at Mahila Police Station under Section 137(2) of the Indian Penal Code, Case No. 04/2026. Dinesh is 158 cm tall, thin, with a wheatish complexion, wearing a dark gray sweater and black pants. Kumaraswamy is 167 cm tall, medium build, dark complexion, wearing a light green shirt and cream pants.

Anyone with information is urged to contact the Women's Police Station, PI 8073476715, ASI 97438421109, or the Koppal Control Room at 9480803700, the District Child Protection Officer stated.

State Pratibha Karanji Kalotsava set for Koppal

KOPPAL

The State Level Pratibha Karanji and Kalotsava for 2025-26 will be held on February 7 and 8 at Sri Siddeshwara Ranga Mandir, located inside Karnataka Public School, High School Division, in Karatagi town of Koppal district.

The event is being organised jointly by the School Education Department, the Additional Collector's Office, Kalaburagi, the District Administration, the Zilla Panchayat, and the School Education Department of Koppal district, according to an official release.

Minister for School Education and Literacy Madhu Bangarappa will inaugurate the programme. Legislative Council Chairman Basavaraj S. Horatti will attend as chief guest. District In-charge Minister and Minister for Backward Classes Welfare, Kannada and Culture Thangadgi Shivaraj Sangappa will preside over the function and also formally launch the competitions.

Several elected representatives will join as special guests, including Kushtagi MLA Doddanagouda Hanumagouda Patil and Yelaburga MLA Basavaraja Rayareddy, who is also the Economic Adviser to the Chief Minister. Members of Parliament, MLAs, MLCs, and heads of local authorities and boards are also expected to be present. Senior officers from the School Education Department and other state departments will attend as special invitees.

Top district officials, including the Deputy Commissioner, Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer, and Superintendent of Police, will also take part.

DISTRICT FESTIVITY MEET

Preparatory meetings scheduled for February celebrations

GADAG

The District Collector's office has called two preparatory meetings in Gadag to organize upcoming cultural celebrations this month, officials said. The meetings will be chaired by the Additional District Collector at the District Collector's Hall.

The first meeting, scheduled for February 7 at 11:00 am, will focus on arrangements for Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Jayanti, which will be celebrated on February 19. Dr. Basavaraj V.H. Bellary, Assistant Director of the Kannada and Culture Department, said the preliminary session aims to coordinate programs, ensure participation, and plan smooth conduct of the event.

The second preparatory meeting will follow on the same day at 11:30 am for Shri Santkavi Sarvajna Jayanti, to be observed on February 20. Dr. Bellary said officials will discuss program schedules, venue arrangements, and other administrative requirements to maintain the traditional spirit of the celebrations.

Both meetings will involve representatives from government departments, cultural organizations, and local authorities to streamline logistics and security measures. Officials emphasized that such preparatory sessions are essential for organizing public events successfully and encouraging community participation.

The Kannada and Culture Department encouraged citizens to attend the celebrations and join in preserving Karnataka's cultural heritage while paying tribute to historical and literary figures.

These steps reflect the government's commitment to promoting cultural awareness and honoring the state's rich history and traditions.

QUICK READ

Chitradurga Hostel seeks building for rent

Chitradurga

The Minority Matric Girls Hostel in Chitradurga city is seeking a rental building to accommodate 100 students. The newly approved post-matric hostel operates under the Taluk Extension Officer, Minority Welfare Department, Chitradurga Sub-Divisional Office. The required building should include a kitchen, dining area, separate living rooms, borewell water, and adequate toilets and bathrooms. Interested property owners are invited to offer suitable premises within Chitradurga city limits. For details, contact the Taluk Extension Officer's Office at Sri Anjaneya Nilayam, Saraswathipuram, 1st Main Road, Chitradurga, or call 9164167164. The move aims to ensure safe, comfortable housing for minority girls pursuing education.

Upalokayukta to hear complaints in Chikkaballapura

Chikkaballapura

Honorable Upalokayukta K.N. Phanindra will tour Chintamani, Bagepalli, Shidlaghatta, and Chelur taluks on February 6 and 7 to address complaints and pending cases registered with the Lokayukta. The official visit aims to provide citizens an opportunity to present grievances directly and ensure timely action. On February 7 at 10 am, hearings for these complaints will be conducted at Chintamani Taluk Panchayat's Sampath Soudha. District Collector G. Prabhu stated that the initiative strengthens transparency, accountability, and public trust in governance. Residents are encouraged to participate and bring their concerns for proper investigation and resolution by the Lokayukta authorities.

Grassroots awareness vital to stop female foeticide

Dr. Thippeswamy raised concern over minor pregnancies, stressing strict enforcement of the PCPNDT Act to stop illegal sex determination and abortions

CHITRADURGA

Dr. K.T. Thippeswamy, Member of the Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, stressed the need for strong grassroots awareness to prevent female foeticide and protect the rights of girl children.

He spoke during a review meeting on the implementation of the PCPNDT Act at the District Health Officer's office on Thursday. He said female foeticide is a direct violation of a child's right to life and must be stopped through strict law enforcement and public awareness.

Dr. Thippeswamy expressed concern over rising cases of pregnancies among minor girls and said the PCPNDT Act has become even more important today. He directed officials to take firm steps to prevent illegal sex determination tests and abortions carried out only because the unborn child is female.

He instructed that advisory and monitoring committees under the Act must meet regularly and not just on paper. He also voiced dissatisfaction over the lack of proper meetings and asked officials to prepare clear action plans.

He said change cannot happen only through district or state-level discussions. Awareness must reach villages through Women and Child Protection Watch Committees. Regular monitoring of hospitals and scanning centres is also necessary to ensure that rules are followed.

As part of the visit, Dr. Thippeswamy and the district inspection team conducted surprise checks at scanning centres, including Kirti Hospital and Aafia Hospital in Chitradurga city. They examined records and pointed out shortcomings that need correction.

District health and famil welfare officers, committee members, and taluk health officials attended the meeting. Officials agreed to strengthen monitoring, spread awareness, and work together to create a safe and supportive environment for every girl child.

Kadadi Village Lake Project launched with rituals

GADAG

District Director Keshav Devanga highlighted the project's focus on water conservation, village development, and community participation, urging villagers and lake committees to cooperate and maintain lake cleanliness

A Bhoomi Puja ceremony was held for a public drinking water lake in Kadadi village of Hombala zone under the Dharmasthala Gramabhiruddhi Yojana. The work is part of the 2025–26 "Nammur Namma Kere" program aimed at restoring lakes and improving water sources in rural areas.

District Director of the Rural Development Project, Keshav Devanga, spoke about the importance of the initiative. He explained that the project focuses on water conservation, village development, and community participation. He requested the lake committee members and villagers to cooperate with workers during the construction process and to help maintain cleanliness around the lake.

Village elder Veerupakshappa praised the Dharmasthala project and expressed gratitude to the Heggade couple for taking up such social service. He said that the village would fully support the lake development work.

Lake Committee President Rudrappa Garawada said it was a proud moment for the village to receive the project. He added that he would serve honestly and without personal expectations. Vice President Shivananda Maragol said participating in this service was a blessing and urged everyone to work together without political or social differences.

Koppal Regional Lake Engineer Satish, Taluk Field Planning Officer Uma, Agriculture Supervisor Kiran Mahendrakar, and Zonal Supervisor Mallikarjuna Gowdru were present. Panchayat President Kavita Konimani, Union President Annapurna Naik, village elders, Gram Panchayat members, Lake Committee members, self-help group members, and many villagers also attended the program.

The ceremony marked the beginning of efforts to improve water storage and ensure safe drinking water for the people of Kadadi. Villagers expressed hope that the revived lake would support agriculture, livestock, and daily needs while strengthening unity and shared responsibility.

Hostel principal, manager suspended over rice theft

CHIKKABALLAPURA

Deputy Commissioner G. Prabhu has suspended Principal Nagaraj and hostel manager Radhika S. of Kittur Rani Chennamma Residential School in Kondareddihalli, Gudibande taluk, pending a departmental inquiry.

The action follows the misappropriation of 4.40 quintals of rice from the hostel's stock. Records show 60 quintals of rice and 30 quintals of wheat were lifted from Gudibande TAPCMS, but 4.40 quintals of rice were missing. Investigations suggest the principal and manager misused the supplies. Authorities have ordered a full inquiry, suspending them immediately to ensure accountability and safeguard government provisions meant for students in the residential hostel.

Unable to pay a bribe, the farmer felt cheated, complained to the Tahsildar, but officials never inspected land

Taluk office sees farmer's novel radish protest

TUMAKURU

A frustrated farmer staged an unusual protest outside the taluk office in Madhugiri, Tumakuru district, saying he would offer radishes instead of money as a bribe to revenue officials.

Prasannakumar, a farmer from Doddari Jakkenahalli village, used a microphone to shout slogans in front of the office. He said he had no cash to pay bribes and invited officials to take the radish crop he had grown on his field. His protest quickly drew the attention of passers-by and other visitors at the government office.

The farmer grows vegetables and other crops for a living. However, he has been struggling for the past two years because there is no proper road to reach his land. He had earlier appealed to the taluk administration to build an access road, but he claimed that his requests were ignored.

Prasannakumar later approached the Lokayukta, which reportedly directed officials to help provide a road within a month. Despite this, he alleged that some officials asked him for money to conduct a site inspection related to the road work.

Unable to afford any bribe, the farmer said he felt helpless and cheated. He also submitted a complaint to the Tahsildar, but he claimed that neither revenue officers nor village accountants visited his land so far.

With no response from authorities, the angry farmer chose a symbolic protest, offering his freshly grown radishes as a "bribe," hoping his voice would finally be heard.

People who gathered nearby listened with surprise as he spoke, and some said his protest showed the struggles faced by small farmers when simple government services become delayed, costly, or unfair.

Free heavy vehicle training for SC candidates

CHIKKABALLAPURA

The Social Welfare Department has launched free heavy vehicle driving training for Scheduled Caste candidates under the PM-AJAY scheme. Training will be held at KSRTC centers in Malur, Malavalli, Hassan, Chikkamagaluru, and Holalkere, and interested candidates are invited to apply.

The one-month program offers free accommodation, meals, and a driving license in collaboration with the Transport Department. Applicants must be under 45 years of age. The initiative aims to provide skills and employment opportunities for eligible candidates.

Those interested can register directly at their nearest training center or online at ksrtcjobs.karnataka.gov.in. Deputy Director Tejananda Reddy urged eligible candidates to take full advantage of this scheme. For more details, contact Malur-7760994432, Malavalli-7760990137, Holalkere-7019072560, Chikkamagaluru-9606037746, or Hassan-7760990533. The department encourages all eligible individuals to join and benefit from this opportunity.

VSKU postgraduate centre gets new administration building

BALLARI

The Vijayanagara Sri Krishnadevaraya University Postgraduate Centre at Nandihalli in Sandur taluk of Ballari district reached a new milestone on Thursday with the inauguration of the Suvarna Mahotsav Administration Building. The new building, constructed at a cost of Rs 145.47 lakh, aims to strengthen academic administration and improve facilities for students and staff.

The building was inaugurated by Ballari Lok Sabha Member of Parliament E. Tukaram, who said the centre plays a key role in providing higher education to students from rural and backward areas. He assured that he would support efforts to bring more funds for the overall development of the centre in the coming days.

University Vice Chancellor Prof. Muniraju M. and Postgraduate Centre Director Prof. Ravi B. also spoke at the event, highlighting the importance of modern infrastructure in improving teaching quality and smooth administration.

Lakshman H., Vice Chairman of the Karnataka Government Mineral Corporation Limited, and Keerthiraj D., owner of the building, attended as special invitees. Faculty members, non-teaching staff, and students were present in large numbers. Officials said the new building will allow all administrative work to function under one roof, making services faster, more organized, and student-friendly. The inauguration marks a positive step toward long-term growth of the postgraduate centre region.

District government employees sports meet on February-6

CHIKKABALLAPUR

A district-level sports meet and cultural programme for state government employees will be held on February 6 at 11 am at the Sir M.V. District Sports Hall in Chikkaballapur city.

The event is being organised by the District Administration, Zilla Panchayat, Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, and the Karnataka State Government Employees Association, Chikkaballapur.

Higher Education Minister and District In-charge Minister Dr. M.C. Sudhakar will inaugurate the programme. Chikkaballapur MLA P.E. Pradeep Easwar will preside over the function.

Several public representatives are expected to attend as chief guests, including Members of Parliament, MLAs, MLCs, and heads of various state boards and corporations. Senior government officials from different departments will also be present.

Officials said the sports meet aims to encourage physical fitness, team spirit, and friendly bonding among government employees from across the district. Cultural events will also be held to showcase talents and promote unity among staff members working in different departments.

Representatives of the Government Employees Association, including state and taluk-level leaders, along with office bearers of various employee groups, will take part. All government employees in the district have been invited to participate in the programme.

Organisers said such events help reduce stress, improve morale, and strengthen coordination among departments. They added that the meet will be conducted in a festive atmosphere, giving employees a chance to relax, compete in sports, and celebrate together outside their regular work environment.

Authorities seize illegal commodities in Chikkaballapura

CHIKKABALLAPURA

The Food and Police Departments conducted joint operations in Chikkaballapura, seizing 62 cylinders in Peresandra village for illegal storage and supply. Cases were registered at the Peresandra Police Station under the Essential Commodities Act-1955. Separately, a complaint revealed rice and ragi meant for ration card holders were stored illegally at Shri Dhanalakshmi Stores godown in Gauribidanur taluk. Officials recovered eight 50-kg rice bags and sixty ragi bags from the godown. A case was filed at Gauribidanur Rural Police Station under the same Act. District Commissioner G. Prabhu stated that these actions aim to protect public distribution items and ensure lawful use of government supplies.

Child Rights Training scheduled in Chitradurga

CHITRADURGA

A one-day training program on child rights and child protection laws will be held in Chitradurga on February 6. The program is being organized jointly by the Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, Directorate of Child Protection, District Administration, Zilla Panchayat, Women and Child Development Department, District Child Protection Unit, and the District Balabhavan Hall. The training will begin at 11 am and is meant for officers and staff working in child care institutions across the district.

Dr. K.T. Thippeswamy, Member of the Karnataka State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, will inaugurate the program. Deputy Director of the Women and Child Development Department K.H. Vijayakumar will preside over the event. DDPI M.R. Manjunath, Women and Child Development Officer Gangappa, District Narrator D. Manjunath, and Child Welfare Committee President P. Sheela will attend as chief guests. Dr. S.P. Tavikumar from Tumkur Child Welfare Committee will be resource person.

VILLAGE WATER TRAINING

VWSC members trained for 'Har Ghar Jal' Mission

CHITRADURGA

A special training program was held for Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) members under the Jal Jeevan Mission to prepare villages in Chitradurga district for the 'Har Ghar Jal' declaration. The initiative aims to provide piped drinking water to every rural household while ensuring sustainable management and water quality monitoring.

Organized in collaboration with the Zilla Panchayat, Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Department, and GRAMS, the program covered training and follow-up sessions at Gram Panchayat offices in Chitradurga, Holalkere, Hosadurga, Hiriyur, and Challakere taluks. Officials focused on teaching members about community participation, monitoring water quality, and proper maintenance of the water supply system.

Authorities emphasized that while water delivery to every household is essential, its effective management and local ownership are equally important for the success of the mission. The program also aimed to raise awareness among villagers to enable the official declaration of their villages under the scheme.

Development officers, Gram Panchayat secretaries, local elected representatives, ASHA workers, Anganwadi workers, and water bell operators actively participated in the training. Officials said the program strengthens community involvement and equips local committees with the skills needed to safeguard and manage rural drinking water resources effectively.

Photographs from the event showed VWSC members engaged in practical sessions and discussions on sustainable water management and hygiene practices, marking a key step toward achieving 'Har Ghar Jal' in Chitradurga district.

QUICK READ

Gujarat HC allows Bhupendra Patel govt to reclaim Motera land

Ahmedabad

The Gujarat High Court on Thursday allowed the state government to resume possession of around 45,000 square metres of land linked to jailed self-styled godman Asaram in Ahmedabad's Motera area, bringing an end to a long-running legal dispute over the property near the Narendra Modi Stadium. The court upheld the government's decision to reclaim the land, holding that the original conditions of allotment had been violated and that unauthorised constructions raised on the site could not be regularised.

Female medic dies suspiciously at Vijayawada hospital

Vijayawada

A post-graduate medical student was found dead under suspicious circumstances at a government hospital in Andhra Pradesh's Vijayawada on Thursday, officials said. Battula Deepika, a student of PG final year in the Anaesthesia Department, was found dead in the Vijayawada Government General Hospital early in the morning. On getting the information, the police rushed to the spot and launched a probe.

'Table cleaners': Panneerselvam's remarks on North Indians sparks row

Ruling party leaders slammed a DMK minister over remarks on North Indian migrants, calling them divisive and disrespectful.

NEW DELHI

A political controversy erupted on Thursday after a senior DMK minister's remarks on North Indian migrant workers in Tamil Nadu triggered sharp criticism from ruling party leaders, who accused the Congress and its allies of historically treating people from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar as second-rate citizens.

The backlash followed comments made by Tamil Nadu Minister MRK Panneerselvam at a public event in Chengalpattu. Referring to migrant labourers from North India, the minister reportedly said that people from the region were coming to Tamil Nadu to take up low-paying jobs such as cleaning tables, working at construction sites, and selling street food. He further suggested that the lack of employment opportunities in their home states forced them to migrate.

Panneerselvam also contrasted the situation with Tamil Nadu's education policy, claiming that the state's two-language formula and emphasis on English education had enabled many local youths to seek employment abroad. According to him, young people from Tamil Nadu were moving to countries like the United States and the United Kingdom, where they were earning high salaries.

The remarks drew strong reactions across party lines, with leaders calling them insulting and harmful to social harmony. Critics said migrant workers play a vital role in India's economy and should not be demeaned for political messaging.

Speaking to reporters outside Parliament, Union Minister Chirag Paswan accused some leaders of making provocative statements merely to stay in the public eye. There are a few leaders who want to be in the headlines because of their statements. They believe in a divide-and-rule agenda, Paswan said, adding that such leaders divide people on the basis of language, caste, religion, and region.

Paswan said the NDA government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi was committed to the principle of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas. Policies are framed keeping the people of the country at the centre. Those who divide people into east, west, south and north do not care about the nation; they only indulge in petty politics, he said.

LOP MUST BE ALLOWED TO SPEAK, OBJECTIONS CREATED BIGGER ISSUE: THAROOR

NEW DELHI

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor on Thursday said that the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, should be allowed to speak in the Parliament, asserting that objections raised to his remarks during the President's Address had created a larger parliamentary issue. Reacting to the disruption, Tharoor said the Leader of the Opposition was merely quoting material that was already in the public domain.

The LoP should be allowed to speak. He was quoting a matter that was already published in a magazine. It is no longer an unpublished item. All he wanted was to make his point and then move on to other issues in the President's Address. By raising such a big objection and not allowing him to speak, a much larger problem has been created, he said.

The Congress leader also shared details about a recent injury, saying he had suffered a hairline fracture after falling outside Parliament premises. Yesterday, when I came out of

Parliament, I fell down. Unfortunately, I've got a hairline fracture, he said. Despite the injury, Tharoor said he would continue attending Parliament and official duties. I will come every day. I will attend committee meetings next week as well, though unfortunately I will have to do so in a wheelchair, he added.

Earlier, Tharoor also apologised for his absence from internal party discussions, explaining that he had to undergo some medical tests. Please forgive me, I wasn't here as I was at the clinic getting an X-ray done and had to go to the hospital. Because of this, I couldn't participate in the discussions during our party meeting, he said.

Defence secretary visits Indian Army eye camp

Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh visited a major Indian Army eye camp in Bhuj restoring vision to 200 people.

BHUJ

Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh on Thursday visited the Surgical Eye Camp at the Military Hospital Bhuj, marking the conclusion of a three-day medical outreach programme that restored eyesight to more than 200 beneficiaries from the border district of Kutch.

The camp was conducted from February 3 to 5 under the aegis of the Southern Command and organised in collaboration with the Army Hospital (Research & Referral), New Delhi. During his visit, the Defence Secretary was accompanied by Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command.

Singh interacted with patients recovering in post-operative wards, enquired about their health, and personally distributed medicines and spectacles to several beneficiaries. He also acknowledged the efforts of the medical teams involved in the initiative, felicitating Brigadier Sanjay Kumar Mishra, Consultant and Head of the Department of Ophthalmology at Army Hospital (R&R), along with the specialist surgical team for delivering advanced eye care under challenging field conditions.

Describing the camp as a commendable example of the Indian Army's commitment to veterans' welfare and military–civil cooperation, the Defence Secretary said such initiatives have a significant impact in improving the quality of life of people living in remote and border regions. He highlighted the importance of taking specialised healthcare services closer to communities that otherwise face logistical and economic barriers in accessing treatment.

The outreach programme catered to a target population of nearly 3,000 people across Kutch district. Beneficiaries included veterans, their dependents, and civilians from more than 120 villages in Bhuj taluka, including remote and strategically sensitive border areas such as Lakhpat, Narayan Sarovar, and Dayapar.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are hereby informed that my client **Smt.Gnanamurthy P S/O Perumal Palani,** residing at #85,1st Main Road 6th Cross, Preethinagara, Laggere, Bangalore, Karnataka-560058, My client are willing to purchase the property by availing a loan with Piramal Finance limited by the present property owner Mr.J. Hariram J S/O Late Jayaram, Registered Sale Deed Document No.LAG-1-01702-2014-15, dated: 11-06-2014, my client further states that any disputes his ownership or possession of the schedule property member of the public are hereby notified that if anyone having any adverse claim in respect of the said property hereby advised to place their claim with appropriate written evidence. please note that claims received without written evidence within 7 Days from the date of publication of this notice there after will not be entertained.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY : All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing Site No.5 Eastern Portion, Assessment No.55, Katha No.229/55/05, EPID No.7667470495, Situated at Laggere Village, Yashavanthapura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, Measuring: East to West: 15 Feet & North to South:40 in all measuring 600 Sq.ft, and bounded on the : **East by:** Site No.4, **West by:** Remaining Western Portion of Site No.5, **North by:** Property No. 55/1, **South by:** 30 Feet Road.

HARISHA .S, Advocate
 # 1479. DRLS PLAZA.
UNION BANK BUILDING. T DASARAHALLI,
Bengaluru-560057. Mob No. 9060950265.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public are hereby informed that my client **Mr. Nagamma W/O Late Ramu and M, Shruthi R D/O Late Ramu M and R Sunil S/O Late Ramu M. residing at # 265, 10th Cross,3rd main, 2nd Stage Bogadi, Mysore, Karnataka- 570026. My clients have owned the property by through Registered declaration Deed Document No.*MYS-1-00998-2018-19, dated: 02-05-2018, now my client availing loan from Piramal Finance Ltd,** if any person/persons objecting for the proposed purchase or having any rights, title and interest over the schedule property may forward their objections or claims to the undersigned in writing with supporting documents within seven (07) days from the date of this publication. if there were to be no response to this notice within the time stipulated, my client will proceed with the Loan from Piramal Finance Ltd*. Any response after the expiry of the stipulated time,the same will be ignored.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY: All that piece and parcel of the Property bearing *Property No.2577/A-1, C.H.20/A-1 E PID NO 3919338338 Dhakale sankya 26400820 situated at 4th Cross, Hosabeedi, K. G. Koppal, Chamaraja Mohalla, Bangalore City, Built on site measuring East to west : 30 feet and North to South: 30 feet Totally 900 Sq feet, and bounded on **East By :** Road, **West By :** Property of Smt. Puttalingamma, **North By :** Property of Smt. Kempamma, **South By :** Property of Smt. Kempamma.

HARISHA .S, Advocate
 # 1479. DRLS PLAZA. UNION BANK BUILDING. T DASARAHALLI, Bengaluru-560057.
Email : harishsgowda48@gmail.com
Mob No. 9060950265.

NAME CHANGE

I, **TABASSUM BEGUM MOHAMMED TOUSEEF** Resident of No. 1256, 1st Main, 3rd Cross Rajiv Gandhi Nagar H S R Layout 7th Sector Bengaluru -560 068 have changed my name to **TABASSUM BEGUM** Vide Affidavit Dated: 05.02.2026 before notary R.BASAVARAJA Bengaluru.

ಮಾನ್ಯ ಪ್ರಧಾನ ಸಿವಿಲ್ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಧೀಶರ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯ ಮತ್ತು ಜೆ.ಎಂ.ಎಫ್.ಸಿ. ದೊಡ್ಡಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ
ಸಿ.ಮಿಸ್. ಸಂ.515/2025
ಅರ್ಜಿದಾರ: ಶ್ರೀ ಕೆ.ನಾಗೇಂದ್ರಕುಮಾರ್ ಬಿನ್ ಎ.ಎನ್.ಕೃಷ್ಣಪ್ಪ, ವಯಸ್ಸು ಉಸಮಾರು 52 ವರ್ಷ. ವಾಸ- ಆರೂಡಿ ಗ್ರಾಮ, ಸಾಸಲು ಹೋಬಳಿ, ದೊಡ್ಡಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ ವಿರುದ್ಧ
ಎದುರುದಾರರು: ನೋಂದಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿ, ಜನನ ಮತ್ತು ಮರಣಗಳ ರಿಜಿಸ್ಟ್ರಾರ್, ತಹಸೀಲ್ದಾರ್, ದೊಡ್ಡಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ
ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ
ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕರಲ್ಲಿ ತಿಳಿಯಪಡಿಸುವುದೇನೆಂದರೆ ಮೇಲ್ಕಂಡ ಅರ್ಜಿದಾರರು ಘನ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಅರ್ಜಿದಾರರಾದ ಮುತ್ತಜ್ಜಿಯವರಾದ ದಿವಂಗತ ಗಂಗಮ್ಮ ಕೋಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಲೇಟ್ ಹನುಮಂತಣ್ಣ ಇವರು ದಿನಾಂಕ 18-08-1947 ರಂದು ದೊಡ್ಡಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು, ಸಾಸಲು ಹೋಬಳಿ, ಆರೂಡಿ ಗ್ರಾಮ ಈ ವಿಳಾಸದಲ್ಲಿ ಮರಣ ಹೊಂದಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಅವರ ಮರಣದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಯಾವುದೇ ಅಧಿಕೃತ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳು ಇಲ್ಲದ ಸಲುವಾಗಿ ಮೇಲ್ಕಂಡ ಅರ್ಜಿಯನ್ನು ಜನನ ಮತ್ತು ಮರಣಗಳ ನೋಂದಣಿ 1969ರಂತೆ ಎದುರುದಾರರಲ್ಲಿ ಮರಣದ ದಿನಾಂಕವನ್ನು ನೋಂದಣಿ ಮಾಡಲು ಅರ್ಜಿಯನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಆದಾಗಿ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕರಿಗೆ ಯಾವುದೇ ಆಕ್ಷೇಪಣೆ ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಮೇಲ್ಕಂಡ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯದ ಮುಂದೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ 10.03.2026 ರಂದು ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಹಾಜರಾಗಲು ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ತಿಳಿಯಪಡಿಸಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ ತಪ್ಪಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ತಮ್ಮ ಗೈರು ಹಾಜರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕರಣವನ್ನು ಏಕ ಪಕ್ಷಿಯವಾಗಿ ಇತ್ಯರ್ಥ ಪಡಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.
ಸದರಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ 03.02.2026ರಂದು ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯದ ಸಹಿ ಮತ್ತು ಮೊಹರಿನೊಂದಿಗೆ ನೀಡಲಾಗಿದೆ.
ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯದ ಆದೇಶದ ಮೇರೆಗೆ
ಶಿರಸ್ತೇದಾರರು, ಪ್ರಧಾನ ಸಿವಿಲ್ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಧೀಶರ ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯ, ದೊಡ್ಡಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ
ಅರ್ಜಿದಾರರ ಪರ ವಕೀಲರು: ಬಿ.ಎಸ್.ಮಲ್ಲಿಕಾರ್ಜುನಯ್ಯ, ವಕೀಲರು, ನ್ಯಾಯಾಲಯದ ರಸ್ತೆ, ದೊಡ್ಡಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ

CH CLASSIFIEDS

To place a classified ad contact: **080-41209042**

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MOHAMMED ABDUL HAI S/o NIAMAT ALI JAMADAR, R/o 67, Gandhi Nagar, Samadana Nagar, K G Halli, Arabic College, Bangalore North, Bangalore, Karnataka 560045, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as ABDUL HAI.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, MOHAMMED YUSUF S/o ABDUL HAFIZ MOHAMMED R/o No 01 Ground Floor, Southern Residency, Pushpanjali Theater, Sultan Palya, R T Nagar, Bangalore North, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560032, have changed the name of my minor son MOHAMMED SAUD aged 10 years and he shall hereafter be known as MOHAMMED MUSTAFA.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, BAL LAL AIR S/o LAL AIR, R/o Flat No A2104, 21 Floor, Electronic City Phase 1, Near Bank Of India, Shikaripalya, Electronics City, Bengaluru, Karnataka-560100, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as BAL BAHADUR AIR

IKF Home Finance Limited
Equinox by Phoenix-Tower 3,10th Floor,Diamond Hills, Lumbini Avenue, Rai Durg, Gachibowli, Hyderabad |Telangana – 500081

POSSESSION NOTICE FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY [(Appendix IV) Rule 8(1)]

WHEREAS the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of **IKF Home Finance Ltd.** (hereinafter referred to as "IKF") under Secuitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assests and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002), and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notice dated mentioned below under Section 13(2) of the said Act calling upon you being the borrowers (names mentioned below) to repay the amount mentioned in the said notice and interest thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrowers mentioned herein below having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers mentioned herein below and to the public in general that the undersigned has Taken Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on me under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The borrowers mentioned here in above in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with said property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of **"IKF"** for an amount as mentioned herein under and interest thereon.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) LAN	Description of Secured Assets (Immovable Property)	Demand Notice Date & Amount	Date of Possession
1	**Lan :- LXXTK03624-250013718 and LNXTK02823-240008486 1. Mr/Mrs. M Noor Jaan 2. Mr/Mrs. Mohamed Farauk 3. Mr/Mrs. Mahamad Ajam Are R/O.** Tumkur Koratagere Town 4th Ward, Tumkur, Karnataka, India **And Also At** Pid No. 15-116-4A, Koratagere Town, Tumkur, -572129	All that piece and parcel of the Residential Building bearing Municipal Assessment No.4479/1, 4378/1 and E-Khatha No.15-116-4A measuring East to West: 12.192024 Mtrs and North to South: 6.096012 Mtrs. situated at Ward No.5, Harijana Colony, Koratagere Town and bounded as follows: **East :** Road., **West :** Gally., **North :** Property belongs to Ghouse Peer., **South :** Property belongs to Mahamed Noorulla.	**18.11.2025 / Rs. 3,25,999/- (Rupees Three lakh Twenty Five Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety Nine Only) towards LXXTK03624-250013718 and Rs. 6,52,485/- (Rupees Six lakh Fifty Two Thousand Four Hundred Eighty Five Only) towards LNXTK02823-240008486**	04.02.2026

Place : Tumkur, Karnataka
Date : 04.02.2026

Sd/-
Authorized Officer
For IKF Home Finance Limited

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, DAVANAGERE DIVI, DAVANAGERE.
No.EE:PWD:Dvg/AE-1:IFT-41:2025-26 Dated:- 05.02.2026

SHORT TERM E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Ref : This office tender notification No. IFT-41/2025-26 dated : 05.02.2026.

The works under Head of Account 4059~80~051~0~60~132 CMIDP, 3 works with minimum amount Rs. 450.00 lakhs and maximum amount Rs.1000.00 lakhs , Head of Account 3054-03-102-0-01-200 SH Bridge maintenance 2 works with minimum amount Rs. 21.00 lakhs and maximum amount Rs. 24.00 lakhs , 3054-04-105-0-01-200 MDR Bridge 1 work amount Rs. 10.11 lakhs and 2059-80-053-4-00-200 Dept Building 1 work Rs. 15.00 laks pertaining to Jagalur and Davangere sub divisions under the Jurisdiction of PWD, Davanagere division has been called for the tenders from registered Contractors in KPWD for the above works through KPP Portal as per standard tender documents rules.
Tender dates are as mentioned below:

Details of dates	Sl no. 1, 2 & 3 Works	Sl no 4 & 6 Works	Sl no 5 & 7 Works
1. Last Date & time for tender queries	Date : 06.02.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M.	Date : 10.02.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M.	Date : 06.02.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M.
2. Prebid meeting held : office of Executive enginner, PWD division, Davanagere.	Date : 09.02.2026 Timing 11.30 A.M.	-	-
3. Last Date & time for receipt of tenders	Date : 20.02.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M.	Date : 17.02.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M.	Date : 13.02.2026 Timing 4.00 P.M.
4. Date & time for opening of Technical Bid :	Date : 21.02.2026 Timing 4.30 P.M.	Date : 18.02.2026 Timing 4.30 P.M.	Date : 16.02.2026 Timing 4.30 P.M.

Further details can be obtained from this office in office hours.

DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/713/2025-26

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Public Works Department Division, Davanagere

Office of the Additional Director General of Police Communication, Logistics And Modernization
Office of the Superintendent of Police-Wireless
No.1, M.G.Road, Bengaluru-560001.
Phone : +91-80-22942324, E-mail : spwireless@ksp.gov.in

Tender Notification (Through e-procurment Portal)

Tender No: KSP/2025-26/IND0552 **Dated: 03.02.2026**

Superintendent of Police Wireless, Bengaluru invited tender for supply of Desktop, 75" LED TV with Movable stand and Video Conference setup with controller, Wired Headphone for Cyber Crime Helpline-1930 through e-procurement portal. Estimated bid value: **Rs. 18.10 Lakhs.** Pre-bid meeting on **09.02.2026 at 11.30 am.** The Last date and time for tender submission **18.02.2026 at 5 pm**. Further details can be obtained by visiting e-procurement portal https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in For more information, please contact the above office.

Sd/-
Superintendent of Police, Wireless, Bengaluru.

DIPR/CP/5464/SSC/2025-26

Bengaluru South Zilla Panchayat
Office of the Executive Engineer
PANCHAYATHRAJ ENGINEERING DIVISION
Ramanagara, Bangalore South Dist.

No.: EE/PRED/Rmg/J.E./TND-34/2025-26 Date: 04.02.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Only through E-PROCUREMENT system)

The Executive Engineer, Panchayathraj Engineering Division, Ramanagara, invites the Itemwise tender. Contractors registered in KPWD, enrolled in PRED/PWD for the works under different Head of Account. Minimum Tender amount **Rs.7.26 lakh**. Maximum Tender amount **Rs.110.00 lakh**. Last Date for submission of Tender Dated: **11.02.2026 by 4:00 PM**. Opening of the Tender Dated: **12.02.2026 at 4:30 PM**. Opening of the Financial Bid Tender Dated: **16.02.2026 at 4:30 PM** onwards (KW-III). For details & further information visit the website **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Or contact this office in office hours.

Sd/- **Executive Engineer**
Panchayathraj Engineering Division, Ramanagara

DIPR/BSD/615/SA/2025-26

TUMKUR URBAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Belagumba Road, Tumkur - 572103, Karnataka State.
Ph: 0816-2272280, Fax: 0816-2255761.
email: tudatmk2009@yahoo.co.in; website: tuda.co.in.

No. TUDA/Tech-AEE/Tender-01/2025-26 Date: 04-02-2026

Notification

Tenders are invited from eligible civil contractors for the works as per Karnataka Public Transparency Ordinance 1999-2000 and as per KW-1, & KW- 2, Standard Bid Document and latest amended provision through e-procurement portal of Government of Karnataka Web Address **(https//kppp.karnataka.gov.in)** Downloading Tender Documents from e-Procurement Portal of Government of Karnataka. Submission of tenders online through e-procurement portal within the prescribed date and time.

Date of issuing of blank tender forms	**Date. 05-02-2026 to D. 20-02-2026 Time 17-00 Hours**
Last date for submission of filled tender forms	**Date. 20-02-2026 Time 17-00 Hours**
Time and date of technical bid opening	**Date 23-02-2026 After 11-00 Am.**
Date of opening of financial bids	**After technical bid approval**

For further details technical branch can be contacted during office hours.

Sd/- Commissioner,
Urban Development Authority
Tumakuru.

DIPR/TUM/RO- 249/25-26/Oysters

ನಗರಸಭೆ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ ನೆಲಮಂಗಲ
ನೆಲಮಂಗಲ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ–562123
ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 080–27722135
Email : ka.nelmangala.cmc@gmail.com

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ನಸನೆ/ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ(ವಿ)/ಟೆಂಡರ್/67/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ : 05.02.2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ
(ಕೆಪಿಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಮಾತ್ರ)

(ಸ್ಟ್ಯಾಂಡರ್ಡ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯೂಮೆಂಟ್ KW 1&2 ರ & KG ನಿಬಂಧನೆಗಳಂತೆ ಅರ್ಜಿ & ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ)
ಪೌರಾಯುಕ್ತರು ನಗರಸಭೆ ನೆಲಮಂಗಲ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ ಇವರಿಂದ 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ನಗರಸಭೆ ನಿಧಿಯಡಿ ಕುಡಿಯುವ ನೀರು ಸಮಸ್ಯೆ ಬಗೆಹರಿಸಲು ವಿವಿಧ ಪ್ರದೇಶಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕೊಳವೆ ಬಾವಿಗಳನ್ನು ಕೊರೆದು ಪಂಪು ಮೋಟಾರ್ ಅಳವಡಿಸಲು ಹಾಗೂ ರೀಡ್ರಿಲ್ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳನ್ನು ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳಲು ಒಟ್ಟು ಮೊತ್ತ **ರೂ: 62.00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳ** ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಐಟಂವಾರು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ನ ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನ ದ್ವಿ ಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಡಿ ಅರ್ಹ ದರ್ಜಿಯ ನೋಂದಾಯಿತ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಕ್ರ.ಸಂ.	ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ	ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ (ರೂ. ಲಕ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ)
01	DMA/2025-26/WS/WORK_INDENT54120	32.00
02	DMA/2025-26/WS/WORK_INDENT54123	30.00

ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮುಂತಾದ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** ಹಾಗೂ ನಗರಸಭೆಯ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಶಾಖೆಯನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದು.

ಶ್ರೀ ಗಣೇಶ್ ಎನ್ ಮಾನ್ಯ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು ನಗರಸಭೆ, ನೆಲಮಂಗಲ	ಶ್ರೀ ಆನಂದ್ ಜಿ ಮಾನ್ಯ ಉಪಾಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು ನಗರಸಭೆ, ನೆಲಮಂಗಲ	ಶ್ರೀ ಬಿ. ಪದ್ಮನಾಭ್ ಮಾನ್ಯ ಸ್ಥಾಯಿ ಸಮಿತಿ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರು ನಗರಸಭೆ, ನೆಲಮಂಗಲ	ಶ್ರೀ ಗಂಗಾಧರ್ ಹೆಚ್ ಪೌರಾಯುಕ್ತರು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ನೆಲಮಂಗಲ

ವಾ.ಸಾ.ಸಂ.ಇ/ವಾಪ್ರ/5456/ಶಿರಡಿ ಸಾಯಿ/2025–26

VISVESVARAYA JALA NIGAMA LIMITED
(Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
Office of the Executive Engineer
VJNL, Yettinahole Project Division, No.3 Arasikere
Ph: 08174233111 e-mail: eeypd3ask@gmail.com
Tender Notification No: EE/YP/VJNL/DIV-03/YGC/TN-09/2025-26/1675 Dated:02.02.2026(CALL-2)

Reference Tender Notification No:TN-03/2025-26/609 Dtd:07.08.2025 (CALL-1) Reference Tender Notification No:TN-05/2025-26/617 Dtd:08.08.2025 (CALL-1) Reference Tender Notification No:TN-06/2025-26/627 Dtd:12.08.2025 (CALL-1) (TWO TENDER DOCUMENT SYSTEM) (Only through E-procurement KPP Portal)

Tenders in electronic mode on "PERCENTAGE BASIS" are invited on behalf of Managing Director, Visvesvaraya Jala Nigama Limited, Bangalore by the Executive Engineer, VJNL, Yettinahole Project Division No.3, Arasikere, Hassan District in Two tender document system. Details of works are as follows Sl.No.1)Name of work: INDENT-300 (CALL-2), INDENT-389 (CALL-2), INDENT-392 (CALL-2) and INDENT-420 (CALL-2) Amount put to tender (Rs. In Lakhs)Min Rs.63.50 to Max Rs.185.63 Category of Contractor: KPWD Class-3 and Above Civil contractors only. Details for submission of bids/EMD/tender conditions/Pre-qualification criteria/ Pre bid details and other information related to above said work can be obtained through e-portal http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in Intending bidder can access the tender document from Date:05.02.2026 through e-portal. The authority competent to accept the tenders shall have the right of rejecting all or any of the tenders without assigning any reasons and will not be bound to accept the lowest tender. Corrigendum/addendum will be published in the e-portal. Any further information required may be obtained from the office of the undersigned during office hours. Executive Engineer, VJNL, YP Division, No.3, Arasikere. Ph: 08174-233111, e-mail: eeypd3ask@gmail.com

Sd/- Executive Engineer, VJNL, Y P Division, No.3 Arasikere

ವಾಸಾಸಂ೦ಇ/ಟಿಸನಿ/ಹಾಸನ/1025/ಕೆಎಸ್.ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

QUICK READ

Stalin to chair cabinet meet as DMK govt moots interim budget

Chennai

Amid growing political activity and preparations for the forthcoming Assembly elections, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin is set to chair an important Cabinet meeting at the State Secretariat in Chennai at 12 noon on Thursday. The meeting is expected to play a decisive role in outlining the government's policy priorities as the ruling DMK completes five years in office. With the government preparing to present its interim budget in the Legislative Assembly, the Cabinet is likely to deliberate on key schemes, welfare initiatives and financial allocations that will shape the budget proposals.

Drug addict strangles his 5-year-old crying daughter to death

Jalandhar

In a shocking incident in Jalandhar, Punjab, a father allegedly strangled his five-year-old daughter to death. The child's only fault was that she was crying continuously, and her father could not tolerate the sound. So, instead of comforting the child to stop the crying he assaulted her brutally, resulting in her death. The accused allegedly first picked up the child and threw her on the ground. When she cried even louder due to shock and pain, he allegedly strangled her, killing her on the spot. The shocking incident took place in Doordarshan Enclave in Jalandhar and police have arrested the accused father.

Infra works: Coimbatore gears up for CM Stalin's visit

Chennai

Preparations are in full swing across Coimbatore as the city readies itself for Chief Minister M.K. Stalin's visit later this month to inaugurate a series of landmark infrastructure projects aimed at strengthening urban services and public amenities. With the visit expected to spotlight Coimbatore's fast-paced civic transformation, multiple departments of the Coimbatore City Municipal Corporation (CCMC) have stepped up efforts to fast-track ongoing works and ensure timely completion. Key projects, including the much-anticipated Periyar Grand Library and Science Centre, upgraded transport facilities, and major water and sewerage schemes, are entering their final stages.

West Bengal Assembly may advance budget session end

The move aims to align the session with CM Mamata Banerjee's court appearance

KOLKATA

The schedule of the ongoing Budget Session of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly is likely to be revised to accommodate Mamata Banerjee's planned visit to New Delhi on February 9, when she is scheduled to participate in a crucial hearing related to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the state.

The hearing will be conducted by a three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court of India on that day. February 9 was initially slated to be the final day of the Budget Session. However, sources within the ruling party indicated that there is now a preliminary decision to conclude the session earlier, on February 7, which falls on a Saturday.

Typically, Assembly sessions are not held on Saturdays, except under exceptional circumstances. A member of the Trinamool Congress legislative team said that the importance of the Chief Minister's presence during the apex court hearing warranted such an adjustment. Since this is a rare and significant occasion, considering the Chief Minister's participation in the Supreme Court hearing, the last day of the Budget Session might be February 7, the member said.

Notably, Chief Minister Banerjee has been closely involved in the legal proceedings concerning the SIR. She was present in the Supreme Court and personally argued the matter, underscoring the political and administrative significance the state government attaches to the case.

Meanwhile, the financial business of the House is continuing as scheduled. The Chandrima Bhattacharya, Minister of State for Finance (independent charge), is set to present the interim, or vote-on-account, budget in the Assembly at 2.30 p.m. on Thursday. The interim budget will outline the government's expenditure plans until a full budget is presented later.

During the Budget Session, the Treasury Bench is also expected to move two special motions. The first motion will condemn the ongoing Special Intensive Revision in West Bengal, which the state government has strongly opposed.

BJP's Dilip Kumar Jaiswal slams Rahul

PATNA

Senior BJP leader and Bihar minister Dilip Kumar Jaiswal on Thursday strongly criticised Congress MP and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi for his remarks against Union Minister of State Ravneet Singh Bittu, saying the language used reflected arrogance and a lack of political decorum.

Reacting to reports that Rahul Gandhi had referred to Bittu as a traitor friend, Jaiswal said such remarks were unbecoming of a leader holding a constitutional position. The language used by Rahul Gandhi reflects arrogance, and history has shown that arrogance in public life does not last long. God does not allow it to endure, Jaiswal said, adding that Gandhi's conduct and manner of speaking showed a lack of dignity expected from the Leader of Opposition.

The BJP leader emphasised that political disagreements must be expressed with restraint and a sense of responsibility, especially when comments touch upon sensitive issues related to national unity, the armed forces, or communities known for their sacrifices for the country. He warned that reckless language could deepen divisions and undermine democratic norms.

Jaiswal also reacted to remarks made earlier by Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, who had criticised Rahul Gandhi over the issue. Supporting Puri's stance, Jaiswal said the contribution of the Sikh community to India was beyond question and should never be dragged into partisan political debates.

The Sikh community has made immense sacrifices for this country and even for the world, Jaiswal said. From protecting the nation's borders to upholding Sanatan traditions, their contribution is historic and inspirational. Any statement that questions their faith, loyalty, or commitment to the nation will never be accepted by the people of India.

He added that communities with a long legacy of service and sacrifice deserve respect across party lines and should not be targeted through provocative remarks for political mileage. According to Jaiswal, leaders occupying high constitutional positions carry a greater responsibility to maintain civility in public discourse.

'Praying for his long, healthy life in service of people'

NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday extended birthday greetings to Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang Golay and said he was praying for the leader's long and healthy life in the service of the people. PM Modi took to social media platform X and wrote, Birthday wishes to Sikkim CM Shri Prem Singh Tamang Golay Ji. Praying for his long and healthy life in service of the people.

Prem Singh Tamang's journey began in Singling, West Sikkim, where he was born on February 5, 1968, into a humble farming family. Growing up in a rural setting, he experienced the rhythms of village life — early mornings in the fields, community responsibilities, and the quiet dignity of simplicity which shaped his early worldview.

After completing his studies at Darjeeling Government College, Tamang chose not to pursue an urban career and instead returned home to work as a government school-teacher. Those who knew him during this period describe him as soft-spoken and dedicated, with a strong belief that education was key to empowering Sikkimese youth.

However, his desire to serve people could not remain confined to the classroom. Witnessing the everyday struggles faced by ordinary citizens including limited opportunities, poor infrastructure, and the lack of responsive governance, he realised that meaningful change could only be brought through active participation in politics.

In the 1990s, Tamang entered public life and began working within the Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF), which dominated the state's political landscape at the time. His diligence and strong connection with grassroots communities helped him emerge as a popular figure. However, his independent approach and vision reportedly brought him into conflict with the party's top leadership.

In 2013, he broke away from the SDF and founded the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM). At the time, many viewed him as a rebel with little chance of challenging the entrenched power structure. Yet, Golay's authenticity and direct connect with rural voters gradually turned scepticism into growing support.

After 25 yrs in Idukki, Augustine set to face toughest poll test

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

After a quarter century as the undisputed face of Kerala Congress (M) in the hilly Idukki Assembly constituency, State Water Resources Minister Roshy Augustine is bracing for what could be the toughest electoral battle of his career as he gears up for a sixth consecutive contest. The 56-year-old minister, known for his soft-spoken demeanor and accessibility, has consistently defied political odds, winning five straight elections from Idukki. Four of those victories came when his party was part of the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF). Even the dramatic shift of Kerala Congress (M) to the CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) ahead of the 2021 Assembly polls failed to dent his winning streak, as Augustine secured his fifth term.

T'gana Group I candidates get big relief as HC sets aside single-judge order

HYDERABAD

In a huge relief to the candidates selected by the Telangana State Public Service Commission for Group-1 posts, the Telangana High Court on Thursday set aside the orders of a single judge, which had cancelled the results and merit list.

A division bench of Chief Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh and Justice G.M. Mohiuddin pronounced the orders on the petitions filed by the Telangana State Public Service Commission (TGPSC) and some selected candidates challenging the single judge order by Justice Namavarapu Rajeshwar Rao, which had set aside the final marks list and General Ranking List of the Group-1 Mains examination.

The single judge, in his order on September 9, 2025, had directed the TGPSC to either manually re-evaluate all answer scripts or re-conduct the examinations within eight months, citing glaring lapses in the evaluation process. The TGPSC was directed to complete the process of re-evaluation and declaration of results in eight months, failing which the Main exams will be cancelled and a re-exam will be conducted for all the candidates who passed the Preliminary. However, the division bench stayed this order, allowing the TGPSC to proceed with issuing appointment orders to successful candidates for Group-I posts based on the results.

The bench had made it clear that the appointments will be subject to the final order. After the division bench's interim order, the TGPSC released the list of provisionally selected candidates based on the General Ranking List (GRL) announced on March 30, 2025. The Commission announced selected candidates for 562 posts out of 563 posts for which the Main examination was conducted from October 21 to October 27, 2024.

One post is kept vacant in view of the orders of the High Court in a case. The Division Bench had concluded the hearing of arguments on December 31, 2025, and reserved its orders. Though the verdict was to be pronounced on January 22, it was reserved till February 5.

Bihar govt 'covering up' NEET aspirant's death, claims RJD

PATNA

Senior Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader and Maner MLA Bhai Virendra on Thursday accused the Bihar government of covering up the suspicious death of a NEET aspirant and alleged that pressure is being exerted on opposition leaders who are speaking out on the issue.

Speaking to media persons outside the Bihar Legislative Assembly, Bhai Virendra said, The Bihar government is trying to cover up the NEET aspirant suspicious death case. The state police are applying pressure on opposition leaders who are making statements on this issue.

'I'm Heartbroken': Tharoor's son after retrenchment by Washington Post

WASHINGTON

Ishaan Tharoor, a senior international affairs columnist and son of Congress MP Shashi Tharoor, was among those laid off by The Washington Post, in what has been described as one of the most extensive newsroom job cuts in recent media history.

The Jeff Bezos-owned newspaper reportedly reduced nearly one-third of its workforce as part of a large restructuring exercise that also involved shutting down its sports desk and scaling back several international bureaus.

Ishaan Tharoor confirmed the development on social media. He had been associated with the publication for close to 12 years and said he was 'heartbroken' for the newsroom and his 'wonderful colleagues'.

I have been laid off today from the @washingtonpost, along with most of the International staff and so many other wonderful colleagues. I'm heartbroken for our newsroom and especially for the peerless journalists who served the Post internationally editors and correspondents who have been my friends and collaborators for almost 12 years. It's been an honour to work with them, he said in a post on X.

He also recalled the launch of his WorldView column in 2017. I launched the WorldView column in January 2017 to help readers better understand the world and America's place in it and I'm grateful for the half a million loyal subscribers who tuned into the column several times a week over the years, he added.

In a separate update on X, Tharoor shared what appeared to be an image from inside the newsroom, where a poster displaying the newspaper's well-known slogan, Democracy Dies in Darkness, could be seen. He captioned the image with the words, A bad day. The post was later reshared by his father as well.

MAOIST-FREE INDIA

Security forces clash with Maoists in Chhattisgarh

BIJAPUR

Security forces engaged in a fierce encounter with armed Maoists in Bijapur district on Thursday, underscoring ongoing efforts to curb left-wing extremism in the conflict-prone Bastar region.

The operation unfolded in the dense southern forested areas of Bijapur, long considered a stronghold of Maoist activity.

According to officials, the operation was launched following specific intelligence inputs about the presence of Maoist cadres in the South Bijapur zone. Acting on the information, joint teams comprising personnel from the District Reserve Guard (DRG) and other specialised security units moved into the area to conduct a search-and-cordon mission.

Intermittent exchanges of fire reportedly began around 7:30 a.m. as security personnel advanced through difficult terrain marked by thick forests and limited visibility. The encounter continued for several hours, with both sides firing as forces pressed forward to dominate the area and prevent the militants from escaping.

As the operation progressed, authorities recovered the body of one Maoist from the encounter site, along with an AK-47 assault rifle, sources said. The recovery indicates that security forces were able to breach at least one Maoist position during the firefight.

Local reports suggested that several other Naxalites may have been killed in the clashes, including a senior cadre believed to be a Naxal commander and a Divisional Committee member. However, officials cautioned that these claims could not be immediately verified. The Chhattisgarh Police said confirmation would only come after detailed verification and completion of the operation. The Superintendent of Police of Bijapur stated that a comprehensive report would be released once the search operation concludes and all facts are thoroughly cross-checked. At this stage, it would be premature to comment on the exact number of casualties on either side, an official said.

A large contingent of security personnel remains deployed in the area to secure the encounter site, comb nearby forest stretches, and look for any injured or fleeing Maoists. The presence of additional forces is also aimed at preventing possible retaliatory attacks or ambushes.

Altum Credo Home Finance

ALTUM CREDO HOME FINANCE PRIVATE LTD
Regd. Office: Floor No. 7, Kalpataru Infinia, Wakdewadi, Shivajinagar, Pune - 411005. Maharashtra (India)

APPENDIX IV **POSSESSION NOTICE** (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY)

The undersigned being the authorized officer of Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd., (ACHFL), Under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ("SARFAESI Act, 2002") and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 ("Enforcement Rules"). Demand Notice(s) issued by the Authorized Officer of the company to the Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) (collectively referred to as the "Borrowers") mention herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to Borrowers and the public in general that the under signed has taken symbolic / physical possession of the property described herein below in supersize of powers conferred upon him under Sub-section(4)of Section 13 of the said act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement rules, 2002. The borrower's attention is invited to prevision of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in receipt of time available, to redeem the secured assets. The borrowers in particular and the public in general are hereby caution not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ACHFL for an amount mention herein under with the interest thereon.

Name of Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) Loan A/c No.	
1. Kumar R (Borrower) **2. Roopa A** (Co-Borrower) **Lan No: 1172020100075**	
Description of Secured Asset	
All that piece and parcel of property bearing Eastern Portion of Site No. 57, BBMP Khatha No. 57, Khaneshumari Khatha No. 47, measuring East to West 15.6 feet and North to South 16.0 feet, situated at BBMP Ward No. 10, Doddabommasandra Village, Yelahanka Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk, presently within the limits of BBMP, and **Bounded on: East:** Property of Chinamma and 6 Feet Road, **West:** The Same No. Property Gifted to R. Manjunath, **South:** Property of Anjinappa, **North:** Property of Chikkamuniyappa.	
Date of Demand Notice and Amount	
18.09.2025 / Rs. 3,85,759/- (Rupees Three Lakh Eighty Five Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty Nine Only)	
NPA Date - 29.08.2025	**Date of Possession : 03.02.2026**

STATUTORY NOTICE TO BORROWERS/ CO-BORROWERS AND GUARANTORS Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) are hereby put to caution that the property may be sold at any time hereinafter by way of public auction/tenders and as such this may also be treated as a notice under Rule 6,8 & 9 of Security (interest) Enforcement Rules,2002.

Place : Bangalore, Karnataka
Date : 06.02.2026

Sd/-
Authorized Officer
Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd. (ACHFL)

QUICK READ

'Taiwan is most important issue in China–US relations'

Beijing

China's leader Xi Jinping has described Taiwan as the most important issue in relations between China and the United States, during a phone call with U.S. President Donald Trump, according to Chinese state media. The conversation highlighted ongoing tensions over the self-governed island, which Beijing considers part of its territory. During the call, Xi urged Trump to act with prudence when it comes to supplying weapons to Taiwan, warning that the issue lies at the core of China's national interests. He emphasized that mishandling the Taiwan question could have serious consequences for bilateral ties. State media reported that Xi said he attached great importance to the relationship with Washington.

Suspect identified in disappearance of 4-year-old noy

Sydney

Police in South Australia have identified a suspect in connection with the disappearance of four-year-old Gus Lamont, who went missing from a remote sheep station in the state's outback late last month. Authorities stressed, however, that the child's parents are not under investigation as the search for answers continues. Gus was last seen on 27 September playing outside his family's home on a vast and isolated sheep property near Yunta, approximately 300 kilometres (186 miles) northeast of Adelaide. According to police, the boy's grandmother had left him alone for around half an hour before returning to check on him. When she could not find him, authorities were alerted, triggering a massive emergency response.

Nigeria deploys army after deadly jihadi attack kills 170

The attack has sent shockwaves across Nigeria, highlighting the expanding reach of extremist violence beyond the country's traditional conflict zones in the northeast.

KATSINA

Nigeria's President Bola Tinubu has ordered the deployment of a full army battalion to the Kaiama district following one of the deadliest attacks recorded in the region this year.

According to a statement released by his office on Thursday, suspected jihadist fighters carried out a coordinated overnight assault on Woro village, killing at least 170 people, including women and children.

The attack, which occurred late Tuesday night, has sent shockwaves across Nigeria, highlighting the expanding reach of extremist violence beyond the country's traditional conflict zones in the northeast. Kwara State, which borders Niger, has increasingly become vulnerable due to its proximity to porous international borders and forested areas that armed groups exploit as hideouts.

Security sources said the attackers stormed Woro village under the cover of darkness, setting homes ablaze and opening fire on residents attempting to flee. Survivors described hours of chaos, with limited access to security forces until daylight. Local authorities confirmed that many victims were killed while trying to protect their families or escape the burning settlement.

The region has witnessed a sharp rise in violent incidents linked to Islamic State West Africa Province and allied armed groups. These factions have intensified attacks on rural communities, combining mass killings with kidnappings for ransom, cattle rustling, and forced displacement.

Analysts warn that central Nigeria is becoming a new frontline as militants shift tactics and geography under sustained military pressure in the northeast.

President Tinubu directed the military to restore order swiftly, protect vulnerable communities, and prevent further cross-border infiltration. The deployed battalion is expected to conduct clearance operations, secure key access routes, and support intelligence-led patrols in surrounding villages. Federal authorities also announced plans to coordinate with local vigilante groups and state officials to improve early-warning systems.

Ukraine–Russia hold second day of US-brokered peace talks

Ukraine-Russia resumed US-brokered negotiations in Abu Dhabi, aiming to end Europe's deadliest conflict since World War II.

MOSCOW

Ukraine and Russia on Thursday entered the second day of U.S.-brokered peace talks in Abu Dhabi, raising cautious hopes for progress toward ending the most destructive conflict in Europe since World War II. Officials from both sides described the first day of discussions as productive, signaling a rare moment of convergence after four years of intense fighting.

The negotiations are being closely watched by the international community, as the war between Ukraine and Russia has reshaped global geopolitics, disrupted energy markets, and triggered one of the largest humanitarian crises in decades. The talks are facilitated by the United States, which has played a central diplomatic role in bringing both sides to the table. Speaking on Thursday, Kirill Dmitriev, an envoy of Russian President Vladimir Putin, said there had been tangible progress and a positive movement forward in discussions focused on ending the war. Dmitriev also noted that parallel efforts were underway to restore strained relations between Moscow and Washington, including through a U.S.–Russia economic working group.

On the Ukrainian side, chief negotiator Rustem Umerov described Wednesday's talks as meaningful and productive, emphasizing that discussions centered on concrete steps and practical solutions rather than abstract principles. Announcing the continuation of negotiations, Umerov said the second day would follow the same structure as the first, involving trilateral consultations, group discussions, and joint coordination of positions.

The second day of negotiations in Abu Dhabi has begun, Umerov said in a message posted on the Telegram app, underscoring Kyiv's cautious optimism while avoiding any premature declarations of breakthrough. Diplomatic sources said the agenda includes security guarantees, humanitarian arrangements, and mechanisms to prevent further escalation. While major disagreements remain, analysts say the tone of the talks marks a notable shift from months of stalled diplomacy and battlefield stalemate.

Malaysia bans e-waste imports, vows to end illegal dumping

KUALA LUMPUR

Malaysia has announced an immediate and full ban on the importation of electronic waste, as the government vowed the country would not be a "dumping ground" for the world's waste. The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission said in a statement late Wednesday that all electronic waste, commonly known as e-waste, would be reclassified under the "absolute prohibition" category effective immediately.This removes the discretionary power previously given to the Department of Environment to grant exemptions for importation of certain e-waste. "E-waste is no longer permitted," MACC chief Azam Baki said in the statement, vowing "firm and integrated enforcement action" to prevent illegal imports.

The expiration of the New START treaty leaves the US and Russia without limits on nuclear arms.

Fears of nuclear arms race rise as US-Russia treaty expires

WASHINGTON

Russia and the United States are no longer constrained by any formal limits on the size of their strategic nuclear arsenals after the expiration of their last remaining arms control agreement on Thursday. The lapse of the New START Treaty marks a significant turning point in global nuclear governance, ending more than five decades of bilateral efforts to regulate the world's largest stockpiles of nuclear weapons.

The treaty, which also involved Russia, capped the number of deployed strategic warheads, intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched missiles, and heavy bombers each side could maintain. It also included a robust verification regime, allowing on-site inspections and data exchanges that helped build transparency and reduce the risk of miscalculation between the two nuclear superpowers.

Originally signed in 2010 and extended in 2021 for five years, New START was widely viewed by arms control experts as a cornerstone of strategic stability. Its expiration without a successor agreement underscores the deep deterioration in U.S.–Russia relations amid broader geopolitical tensions, including conflicts, sanctions, and mutual accusations of treaty violations.

The treaty was the last surviving agreement from a long lineage of nuclear arms control frameworks that began during the Cold War, when Washington and Moscow sought to reduce the risk of catastrophic nuclear confrontation. Earlier accords such as SALT, START I, and New START gradually lowered arsenals from Cold War peaks of tens of thousands of warheads to significantly smaller, though still devastating, numbers.

FRENCH NAVY SEIZES COCAINE SHIPMENT

PARIS

The French Navy has intercepted a vessel carrying a large quantity of cocaine in the Caribbean Sea and handed it over to authorities in Barbados, France's Armed Forces Minister said on Thursday.

The operation comes as the United States and several partner nations step up coordinated efforts to curb the flow of illicit drugs across the Atlantic.

France's Armed Forces Minister Catherine Vautrin announced the seizure in a post on the social media platform X, stating that approximately 678 kilograms of cocaine had been recovered during the maritime operation. The intercepted boat was subsequently transferred to Barbadian authorities for further legal proceedings, reflecting close cooperation between France and regional partners in the Caribbean.

According to defense officials, the interception was carried out during a routine maritime surveillance mission in waters frequently used by drug traffickers to move narcotics from South America toward North American and European markets. Such routes have long been exploited by criminal networks due to vast maritime пространства and limited monitoring capacity in some areas.

France has increasingly taken a frontline role in counter-narcotics operations in the Caribbean and Latin American regions, where it maintains overseas territories and permanent military assets. These include Guadeloupe and Martinique, which provide strategic bases for maritime patrols and intelligence-led operations.

UNHR chief appeals for $400 mn amid funding crisis

GENEVA

The United Nations' top human rights official, Volker Türk, on Thursday appealed for $400 million in funding to address escalating human rights crises worldwide, warning that sharp donor cutbacks have severely weakened the capacity of his office to respond to abuses.

Speaking to delegates in Geneva, Türk said the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is operating in survival mode after contributions fell dramatically over the past year.

The funding appeal is $100 million lower than last year's request, reflecting a forced scaling back of operations amid declining financial support from key donors, including the United States and several European nations. Türk told delegates that while needs are growing across multiple regions, his office is being compelled to do less with fewer resources. We are currently in survival mode, delivering under strain, he said, urging governments to step up their financial commitments.

Over the past year, Türk's office has repeatedly sounded the alarm on serious human rights violations in conflict and crisis zones such as Gaza, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ukraine, and Myanmar. These situations involve allegations ranging from attacks on civilians and mass displacement to political repression and systemic abuses.

Despite the growing scale of violations, Türk said funding constraints have had a direct and measurable impact on the office's work. Human rights monitoring missions were reduced to less than half the number conducted in 2024, significantly limiting independent reporting and early warning capabilities. In addition, the office has scaled back or reduced its presence in 17 countries, leaving fewer international observers on the ground at a time of heightened risk.

The financial shortfall has also taken a toll on staffing. Türk noted that last year the office received $90 million less than required, forcing the elimination of around 300 positions. These job cuts, he said, have directly undermined the organization's ability to investigate abuses, support victims, and engage with governments on accountability and reform.

SU DO KU

Brain-Bender: Can You Solve It?

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6	1	3	2	7	9	5	8	4
7	8	9	5	4	3	2	1	6
5	4	2	8	6	1	3	7	9
8	3	1	6	2	4	7	9	5
4	2	5	7	9	8	1	6	3
9	6	7	1	3	5	8	4	2
2	5	6	9	1	7	4	3	8
3	7	8	4	5	6	9	2	1
1	9	4	3	8	2	6	5	7

Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

Fill a 9×9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3×3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9.

OPERATION RADD-UL-FITNA-1

Pak military ends operation against separatists

QUETTA

Pakistan's military on Thursday said it had concluded a week-long, large-scale security operation against separatist militants in Balochistan, resulting in the deaths of 216 fighters during targeted offensives across the volatile southwestern province. The operation was launched in response to a coordinated wave of attacks that had plunged several parts of the region into chaos and raised fresh concerns over internal security.

Balochistan, Pakistan's largest yet poorest province, was brought to a near standstill on Saturday when militants belonging to the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) carried out one of their most extensive operations to date. According to security officials, attackers stormed schools, banks, markets, and security installations across multiple districts, disrupting daily life and prompting emergency measures by provincial authorities.

In a statement, the military said the operation involved intelligence-based raids, ground assaults, and aerial surveillance aimed at dismantling militant networks and preventing further large-scale attacks. Security forces reportedly targeted hideouts, supply routes, and command structures used by separatist groups operating in remote and rugged terrain.

The operation has successfully neutralized key militant elements and restored a degree of stability in affected areas, the military said, adding that weapons, ammunition, and explosives were also recovered during the campaign. Officials stressed that the action was conducted to protect civilians and critical infrastructure. Balochistan has long been at the center of a low-intensity insurgency, with separatist groups accusing the federal government of exploiting the province's vast natural resources while neglecting local development. Islamabad denies the allegations and says it is investing heavily in infrastructure, education, and security to integrate the region more fully into the national mainstream.

Analysts say the scale of last weekend's attacks marked a significant escalation by the BLA, demonstrating improved coordination and intent to challenge the state's authority. The military's swift and forceful response, they add, reflects growing concern that militancy in Balochistan could undermine major economic projects and regional connectivity initiatives.

Storm Leonardo kills 2 in Portugal, Spain

PORTUGAL

Storm Leonardo tore across the Iberian Peninsula on Thursday, bringing heavy rainfall and powerful winds that led to tragic loss of life and significant disruption in both Portugal and Spain. Authorities confirmed that one man died in Portugal after floodwaters engulfed his car, while in Spain a young girl was swept away by a swollen river after attempting to rescue her dog. Emergency services in Portugal said the victim was trapped inside his vehicle when rapidly rising waters overwhelmed a roadway, leaving him no chance to escape.

Firefighters and rescue teams were deployed across multiple districts as rivers burst their banks, roads were submerged, and landslides were reported in hilly areas. Several towns experienced temporary power outages as strong winds damaged electricity lines and uprooted trees.

QUICK READ

RBI likely to maintain status quo in upcoming policy rate decision

NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is likely to maintain status quo in the upcoming policy decision on Friday, as despite policy rate easing, government bond yields have exhibited persistent hardening in recent periods, among other reasons. According to economists, the choice of eligible securities itself may influence the effectiveness of OMO operations, even when the aggregate quantum of liquidity injection is unchanged. We believe that the choice of eligible securities itself may influence the effectiveness of OMO operations, even when the aggregate quantum of liquidity injection is unchanged, said an SBI Research report.

'Pak facing 'water bankruptcy' with depleting groundwater'

NEW DELHI

Pakistan is facing water bankruptcy with the groundwater table declining sharply every year, as states such as Punjab and Sindh remain locked in a dispute of sharing of water, according to an article in the Karachi-based The News International. The article by Mohsin Leghari, a former Irrigation and Finance Minister of Pakistan's Punjab province, cites the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH) January 2026 report, titled 'Global Water Bankruptcy: Living Beyond Our Hydrological Means in the Post-Crisis Era', to highlight the depth of the water crisis in Pakistan.

India-Pak economies reflect contrasting pictures of growth

NEW DELHI

Pakistan's economy has been in a state of crisis for many years while India, a frequent point of comparison in Pakistani discourse, in sharp contrast, has surged far ahead to become the fastest growing major economy in the world, according to a new report. An article in media outlet Amu.TV states that after the Covid pandemic, the two neighbouring economies move in different directions. In 2022, Pakistan saw a decent rebound with around 6 per cent GDP growth, but this proved short-lived. By 2023, the country's economy had all but stalled, and the IMF forecast only 0.5 per cent growth. On the other hand, in India, the economy remained on a robust growth path with an above 6 per cent growth and was seen as the bright spot of the global economy.

India affirms energy security as top priority

Following the announcement of the India-US trade deal, Trump claimed that India will stop buying Russian oil and invest in Venezuelan oil instead.

NEW DELHI

India emphasised on Thursday that securing reliable and diverse energy supplies remains central to its national strategy, as global markets shift and geopolitical dynamics evolve.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said New Delhi's approach is driven by objective market conditions and long-term energy security interests.

In so far as India's energy security or energy sourcing is concerned, the government has stated publicly on several occasions that ensuring the energy security of 1.4 billion Indians is its supreme priority, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal told reporters at a weekly press briefing in New Delhi. He stressed that decisions on sourcing crude oil will continue to be taken with this objective in mind.

Jaiswal's remarks came amid recent claims by Donald Trump that India would halt purchases of Russian oil and instead increase imports from the United States and Venezuela. India's government made clear that its policy is based on national interest and commercial viability rather than external pressure.

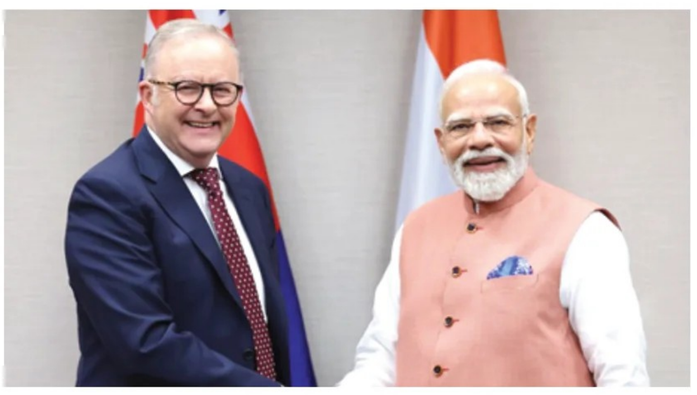
Responding to questions about energy engagement with Venezuela, Jaiswal highlighted the longstanding relationship between Indian public sector undertakings and Venezuela's state energy company PDVSA. Indian firms have maintained an energy partnership with Venezuela since 2008, and India resumed buying Venezuelan crude in 2023–24 when conditions allowed—only to suspend imports again after sanctions were reimposed.

Consistent with our approach to energy security, India remains open to exploring the commercial merits of any crude supply options, including from Venezuela, Jaiswal told journalists.

Analysts note that India's energy strategy is shaped by multiple factors, including price competitiveness, refining requirements, and broader geopolitical shifts. A recent report by SBI Research suggested that shifting a portion of India's crude imports from Russia to Venezuelan heavy crude could lower its fuel import bill by up to $3 billion annually if Venezuelan crude is offered at sufficient discounts.

KEY POINTS

- Energy security is top national priority
- Strategy focuses on diversifying energy sources
- Venezuela is a long-standing energy partner
- India open to commercial oil deals with Venezuela
- PM Modi discussed deepening bilateral ties.



'India-Aus share rock solid vision for stable Indo-Pacific'

SYDNEY

Australia's High Commissioner to India Philip Green on Thursday said that Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi remain rock solid in their shared vision for the Indo-Pacific, emphasising that the region must remain stable, free, and prosperous.

Green highlighted the strong strategic alignment between India and Australia, noting that both countries see the Indo-Pacific as central to their long-term security and economic interests. He said Canberra and New Delhi are closely aligned on maintaining a free, open, and rules-based order in the region, amid evolving geopolitical challenges.

Australia's High Commissioner said leaders of India and Australia remain united on keeping the Indo-Pacific stable.

Australia and India share the Indo-Pacific region and we share a vision for it, that it should be stable and free and prosperous, Green said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and my Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, are absolutely rock solid on that, and that's one of the things driving our bilateral relationship forward.

The Australian envoy identified three key pillars underpinning the growing partnership. The first, he said, is strategic alignment in the Indo-Pacific, where both nations support stability, respect for international law, and freedom of navigation. The second is economic complementarity. Green noted that India and Australia produce very different kinds of goods and services, meaning they rarely compete directly and instead benefit from mutually supportive trade ties.

The third factor driving us together is what we call the human bridge, Green said, referring to the more than one million people of Indian origin who now call Australia home. He praised the Indian diaspora for its contribution to Australian society and its vital role in strengthening bilateral business and people-to-people links.

Green also pointed to the success of the India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement, saying it has already delivered huge results for businesses in both countries. Since the agreement came into force, trade volumes have increased, market access has improved, and new opportunities have opened up across sectors such as education, resources, technology, and services.

Highlighting the broader relationship, the High Commissioner described India as a trusted friend and reliable partner for Australia. He said the steady deepening of ties reflects not just shared interests, but also shared values and long-term confidence in each other.

Historic India-US Trade Deal in final stages: EAM Jaishankar

WASHINGTON

Citing a landmark India–United States trade agreement that is now in its final stages, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Thursday said a strong momentum is clearly visible in the deepening engagement between India and the United States.

The minister made the remarks as he concluded his February 2–4 visit to the U.S., describing the trip as productive and forward-looking.

The historic India–US trade deal is in the final stages of detailing that will be completed very soon, Jaishankar said in a post on X.

He added that the agreement would open a new phase in bilateral ties, unlocking vast opportunities across trade, investment, and strategic cooperation. Overall, a strong momentum is evident, the minister noted.

During his visit, Jaishankar participated in the Critical Minerals Ministerial convened by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, underscoring the growing importance of minerals critical to clean energy, advanced manufacturing, and emerging technologies. Thanking Rubio for his hospitality, Jaishankar said cooperation in the critical minerals sector is advancing rapidly and would be a key pillar of the partnership in the coming years.

The External Affairs Minister held a series of high-level meetings with senior members of the U.S. administration, including separate discussions with Secretary Rubio and U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent. These meetings focused on strengthening the India–U.S. strategic and economic partnership amid evolving global and regional challenges.

Delighted to meet US Secretary Rubio this afternoon, Jaishankar said after one of the meetings. He described the talks as wide-ranging, covering bilateral cooperation as well as regional and global issues. According to Jaishankar, discussions with Rubio spanned multiple pillars of the relationship, including trade, energy, nuclear cooperation, defence, critical minerals, and technology.

Both sides agreed to move swiftly on follow-up engagements. Agreed on the early meetings of various mechanisms to advance our shared interests, Jaishankar said, indicating a push for faster implementation of decisions taken at the political level.

1st tranche of India-US trade deal in 4-5 days Goyal

NEW DELHI

India is set to roll out the first tranche of its Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) with the United States in matter of days which will see a reduction in tariffs on domestic exports to 18 per cent, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Thursday.

The minister said that a joint India–US statement is likely to be released in the next four to five days. Once an executive order is issued following the statement, the reduced 18 per cent US tariff on Indian goods will come into force.

A more comprehensive and formal agreement is targeted for signing by mid-March, he added.

Goyal further stated that India has already entered into a record eight trade agreements and the first tranche of the BTA with the US will soon become the ninth. The FTAs signed by India under PM Narendra Modi will help in the thrust to modernise India, he added.

Large caps, hybrid equities should be portfolio core in 2026

MUMBAI

Investors are being advised to maintain a balanced and disciplined investment approach in 2026, positioning large-cap stocks or hybrid investment products as the core of their portfolios, while taking selective and staggered exposure to mid- and small-cap segments, according to a report released on Thursday.

The recommendation comes amid expectations of continued market volatility, shifting global economic conditions, and evolving domestic growth dynamics.

The report noted that large-cap stocks are likely to offer relatively greater stability and resilience in an environment marked by fluctuating interest rates, geopolitical uncertainty, and uneven global recovery. Companies in the large-cap space typically have stronger balance sheets, diversified revenue streams, and better access to capital, making them more capable of withstanding market shocks compared to smaller peers.

Hybrid investment options, which combine equity and debt exposure, were also highlighted as a suitable core allocation for investors seeking a balance between growth and risk management. These products can help smooth returns during periods of equity market turbulence while still allowing participation in upside opportunities.

The report cautioned against completely avoiding mid- and small-cap stocks, which have historically delivered higher long-term returns.

India's $100B higher edu expansion to add 2.7B sqft

NEW DELHI

Nearly 30,000 acres of new campus land and about 2.7 billion square feet of academic infrastructure are expected in India by 2035 to meet surging student demand, marking world's largest institutional real estate opportunities over the next decade, a report said.

The report from ANAROCK Capital said that meeting the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 target of a gross enrolment ratio (GER) of 50 per cent by 2035 will require roughly 25 million additional seats and about $100 billion in construction-led investment for academic facilities alone, excluding land acquisition and student accommodation infrastructure.

This scale of expansion, underpinned by demographic momentum, rising enrolments, globalisation of education, and landmark regulatory reforms, represents arguably the largest higher-education build-out market globally, the report mentioned.

The real estate services firm highlighted India's higher-education enrolments rose from 27 million in 2010-11 to 45 million in 2022-23, driven by powerful demographic engines and rising household aspirations, and universities increased from 760 in 2015 to 1,338 in 2025, while total higher education institutions grew from 51,534 to 70,018.

We believe the provision in the Union Budget 2026 to support the creation of five university townships reflects a recognition of the gap in academic infrastructure, said Shobhit Agarwal, CEO-ANAROCK Capital.

After the FHEI Regulations foreign higher-education institutions ranked within the top 500 globally can now establish campuses without affiliating with Indian universities.

- $100B construction investment
- 2.7B sq ft new academic space
- 25M additional student seats needed
- Top global universities setting up campuses
- Policy reforms driving expansion

DIVERSIFIED GROWTH

NTPC eyes 30 GW nuclear power capacity by 2047

MUMBAI

Government-owned power major NTPC Ltd is aiming to achieve 30 gigawatts (GW) of nuclear power capacity by 2047, the Minister of State for Power Shripad Naik informed Parliament on Thursday.

The target forms a key component of India's broader plan to scale up nuclear energy to 100 GW by the centenary year of Independence.

In a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha, Naik said NTPC has already taken concrete steps to enter the nuclear power sector. The company has incorporated a wholly owned subsidiary, NTPC Parmanu Urja Nigam Limited (NPUNL), under the Companies Act after obtaining all necessary regulatory clearances. As part of its nuclear expansion roadmap, NTPC is planning to set up multiple nuclear power projects across the country. One of the most significant initiatives is being pursued through Anu Shakti Vidyut Nigam Limited (ASHVINI), a joint venture between NTPC and Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL). The joint venture is in the process of establishing a 4×700 megawatt nuclear power project in Banswara. The project, officially named the Mahi Banswara Rajasthan Atomic Power Project (MBRAPP), is expected to be a major addition to India's nuclear energy capacity. According to current projections, initial testing of the first 700 MW unit is envisaged in the financial year 2032–33.

To further accelerate its nuclear ambitions, the minister said NTPC has issued an Expression of Interest (EoI) to explore various options and potential collaborations with international partners. This move is aimed at leveraging global expertise, advanced technology, and financing models to support India's clean energy transition.

Alongside nuclear power, NTPC continues to expand its renewable energy portfolio. Last month, the company announced a commercial capacity addition of 359.58 MW through solar projects developed by its subsidiaries in Gujarat and Rajasthan, pushing the NTPC group's total commercial capacity beyond 85.5 GW.

With the latest additions, NTPC's total installed commercial capacity now stands at 85,541 MW (85.541 GW). The company currently contributes nearly one-fourth of India's total electricity requirements and has over 30.90 GW of additional capacity under construction, including 13.3 GW from renewable energy sources.

ICC Under-19 World Cup: Record-eyeing India face plucky England

Five-time champions India chase sixth crown as unbeaten England test credentials

HARARE

Five-time champions India will lean on their fearless batting depth when they take on a confident England in the final of the ICC Under-19 World Cup here on Friday.

Champions in five of the 16 editions held so far, India are the most dominant force in the tournament's history since its inception in 1988. Friday's summit clash will mark India's 10th appearance in a final, underlining their sustained excellence at the global age-group level as they bid to reclaim the title they last won in 2022.

India enter the final unbeaten, buoyed by a commanding semifinal performance against Afghanistan, where they

chased down a 300-plus target with remarkable composure. Skipper Ayush Mhatre and opener Aaron George rose to the occasion with innings of substance, signalling timely form at the business end of the tournament.

George's elegant century in the semifinal, complemented by fluent half-centuries from Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and Mhatre, showcased India's attacking mindset. Sooryavanshi, who turns 15 next month, has been one of the standout performers of the competition, already registering three fifties and a century. His audacious strokeplay could once again be decisive on the big stage.

India's middle order has also delivered consistently, with Vihaan Malhotra chipping in with crucial runs and wicketkeeper-batter Abhigyan Kundu impressing both with the bat and behind the stumps.

England, however, arrive with momentum of their own, having knocked out defending champions Australia in the semifinals. Led by Thomas Rew, they remain unbeaten and will pose a stern challenge, particularly with their comfort against pace bowling.

India's seam trio of Deepesh Devendran, Henil Patel and R S Ambrish has been effective so far, but will be tested against an England batting line-up brimming with confidence.

Having beaten England in their only previous final meeting in the 2022 edition, history may favour India — but a collective, disciplined performance will be key to lifting a record-extending sixth title.

Fitness is getting better and I will be back soon: RISHABH PANT

MUMBAI

India wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant expressed optimism about his recovery from injury, saying his fitness is improving steadily and he hopes to return to the field in the near future.

Pant said he has been putting in sustained effort at the BCCI's Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru as part of his rehabilitation programme.

"My fitness is getting better day by day. I am working hard at the Centre of Excellence and I think I'm going to be out on the field soon," Pant said, offering reassurance to fans eager to see him back in action.

The 28-year-old acknowledged that long injury layoffs can be mentally challenging but stressed the importance of staying connected to the game during recovery. According to Pant, his passion for cricket and the support of those around him have played a crucial role in keeping him motivated.

"When I am injured, one thing that always keeps me close to the game is the love for the game and the support from the people around you," he said.

Pant also underlined the need for continuous self-improvement, noting that setbacks provide opportunities to reflect and grow as a professional cricketer. "As a cricketer, you always have to keep adding to your game. I need to keep looking to get better in each and every aspect of my overall gameplay," he added.

Reflecting on the comebacks he has made over the course of his career, Pant said time away from the field has helped him gain a fresh perspective on both cricket and life. However, he admitted that missing top-level competition remains the toughest part of being sidelined.

"When I am injured, the thing I miss the most is really enjoying the game at the highest level. That's something I truly miss," he said.

Pant has been out of the Indian team since January 10 after suffering a right-sided internal oblique muscle tear during a practice session in Vadodara.

India wicketkeeper says rehabilitation progressing well, targets return to competitive cricket soon

Ball boy to leader: Jesper de Jong at the heart of Netherlands' Davis Cup test

BENGALURU

Kneeling by the sidelines, shuffling balls to senior players representing the Netherlands in Davis Cup ties is a memory Jesper de Jong still carries vividly. More than a decade later, the 25-year-old finds himself at the centre of attention, leading his country's challenge against India in the Davis Cup Qualifiers Round 1 tie at the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium this weekend.

De Jong was just 12 when he first served as a ball boy during Netherlands' home Davis Cup encounters. The atmosphere, the team spirit and the pride of playing for one's country left a lasting impression on him. Today, as world No. 88, he is relishing the same emotions from the other side of the net.

"I was a ball boy for four or five years during Davis Cup matches for my current coach, Thiemo de Bakker," De Jong recalled. "Normally, you're alone on the tour. Being part of a team and playing for your country — there's no bigger pride than that."

The Netherlands squad arrived in India without their top two players, Tallon Griekspoor and Botic van de Zandschulp. While their absence weakens the team on paper, De Jong remains unfazed, fully aware of the physical and mental toll of the professional circuit. "Of course, it would have been better if they were here, but younger guys also need opportunities," he said. "There's always pressure. Even getting into the top-100 wasn't easy."

Shehbaz Sharif defends decision, says sports must remain free from political pressures

We're with Bangladesh, boycott of India game is considered stance: PM Sharif

KARACHI

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday defended his government's decision to boycott the T20 World Cup match against India, describing it as a "considered stance" taken in solidarity with Bangladesh.

Sharif said Pakistan had taken a clear and principled position after Bangladesh refused to play its scheduled matches in India citing security concerns, a move that eventually led to Scotland replacing them in the tournament. Pakistan, in turn, was instructed by its government to skip the high-profile February 15 clash against India in Colombo.

"We have taken a very clear stand on the T20 World Cup that we won't play the match against India because there should be no politics on the sports field," Sharif said while addressing the media after a government meeting. "We have taken a very considered stance, and we should completely stand by Bangladesh. This is a very appropriate decision. We are with Bangladesh," he added.

The International Cricket Council (ICC), however, has reacted sharply to Pakistan's decision. The world body has warned the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) of serious consequences if the team fails to turn up for the marquee fixture, which is one of the biggest revenue drivers of the tournament for broadcasters, sponsors and advertisers.

In its communication, the ICC urged the PCB to reflect on the "significant and long-term implications" of such a move, cautioning that it could impact not only cricket in Pakistan but also the wider global cricket ecosystem, of which Pakistan is a key stakeholder.

Despite the controversy, Pakistan's squad has already arrived in Colombo for its other preliminary fixtures, beginning with a match against the Netherlands on Saturday.

The PCB has publicly backed the government's position and indicated it would follow official advice even if a potential rematch against India arises in the knockout stages.

Bangladesh's original refusal to tour India reportedly followed the removal of pacer Mustafizur Rahman from the IPL on BCCI's instructions, amid heightened security concerns in the country.

Marijne looks to reinstall unity in fractured team

BENGALURU

When Sjoerd Marijne chose to return to India to take charge of the women's hockey team after a four-year sabbatical, it raised more than a few eyebrows. The Dutchman had earlier overseen one of the finest chapters in Indian women's hockey, guiding the team to a historic fourth-place finish at the Tokyo Olympics in 2021, before stepping away following the heartbreak of the bronze-medal match.

Back then, the Indian side was a cohesive, high-functioning unit brimming with talent and belief. Today, it finds itself at a crossroads. The recent past has been turbulent, marked by internal discord and leadership turmoil. In December, former coach Harendra Singh resigned amid reports of widespread player unrest over his allegedly authoritarian methods, with accusations of mental harassment and concerns over frequent injuries surfacing publicly. Long-standing issues of groupism also reemerged, exposing visible cracks between senior and junior players.

Marijne's own return was not without controversy. His 2022 book Will Power: The Inside Story of the Incredible Turnaround in Indian Women's Hockey led to defamation cases from players, prompting Hockey India to walk a delicate line between backing the athletes and safeguarding dressing-room confidentiality. Against this backdrop, his reappointment in January left the hockey fraternity divided.

Yet, Marijne insists the challenge is precisely what drew him back. "India has always been my second country," he said during a virtual media interaction. "People ask me why I would return when things are not going well, but I see this as a very nice challenge with motivated players and an organisation that has taken big steps in professionalism."

With a packed calendar ahead, including World Cup Qualifiers in Hyderabad next month, Marijne has little time to settle in. The 51-year-old has made it clear that restoring unity and discipline is his top priority. "My main focus is to create one unit and bring back the culture," he said. "One unit, discipline and a task-driven approach will win you medals."

For Marijne, rebuilding trust and togetherness will be the foundation on which India's next chapter is written.

T20 WC: Australia look to hit the straps, Sri Lanka bank on home support

BENGALURU

When it comes to mastering marquee ICC events, Australia's pedigree is unmatched. With six ODI World Cups, a World Test Championship title and two Champions Trophy triumphs, the Aussies have long set the benchmark in white- and red-ball cricket. Yet, T20 internationals remain their least convincing frontier.

Despite boasting some of the most destructive hitters in the modern game, Australia's T20 World Cup record has been patchy. Their lone title, achieved in 2021 under Aaron Finch, came after years of underachievement and was seen as a triumph against the odds rather than sustained dominance. Since then, failures to reach the semifinals in the last two editions have only underlined their inconsistency in the shortest format.

Mitchell Marsh and his men will be keen to correct that narrative when they open their campaign against Ireland in Colombo on February 11. Confidence, however, is not at its peak. Australia were whitewashed 3-0 in a recent T20I series in Pakistan, albeit with a depleted squad. Even so, questions linger over form and fitness as the tournament approaches.

Much will hinge on Marsh's leadership and the explosive starts expected from Travis Head, whose ability to dismantle bowling attacks can change games in a matter of overs. Support from the middle order — including Cameron Green, Josh Inglis, Marcus Stoinis and Matt Renshaw — will be crucial if Australia are to find rhythm early.

Co-hosts Sri Lanka, meanwhile, are desperate to arrest a prolonged slide since their maiden title win in 2014. Subsequent tournaments have brought disappointment, including early exits and qualification struggles. This time, home conditions offer renewed hope.

Sri Lanka's bowling, led by Wanindu Hasaranga, Maheesha Pathirana and Dushmantha Chameera, is a definite strength.

Fire 'n' Ice: Gambhir's authority and Surya's freedom form a heady cocktail for India

NEW DELHI

With India set to begin their T20 World Cup title defence, attention has firmly shifted to the evolving and highly effective partnership between head coach Gautam Gambhir and captain Suryakumar Yadav — a combination that has delivered impressive results in a short span.

Going purely by numbers, the Gambhir-Surya axis has been a resounding success so far, with India winning 31 of their 39 matches under the duo, translating into a formidable winning percentage of 79.48. More than the statistics, however, it is the balance between Gambhir's uncompromising authority and Surya's liberating leadership style that has reshaped India's T20 template.

Traditionally, Indian cricket has revolved around the captain being the unquestioned leader, with coaches playing a largely supportive role. Be it John Wright with Sourav Ganguly, Gary Kirsten with MS Dhoni, or Rahul Dravid with Rohit Sharma, the skipper always remained the final arbiter. The current set-up marks a subtle but significant shift, with Gambhir emerging as a hands-on strategist whose influence on selection, roles and tactical clarity is unmistakable.

T20 cricket's rapid evolution has perhaps necessitated such a model. Gambhir's football-manager-like approach — direct, intense and deeply involved — has found the perfect on-field executor Suryakumar, a batter supremely confident of his skills and secure in his leadership. Over the past year, Gambhir has largely been the planner, while Surya has been the calm executor.

Gautam Gambhir and Suryakumar Yadav's contrasting yet complementary partnership has reshaped India's T20 approach, delivering dominant results and redefining leadership, strategy and roles ahead of the 2026 World Cup campaign.

Their shared history goes back to Kolkata Knight Riders, where Gambhir the captain backed Surya the finisher, even coining the now-famous 'SKY' moniker. That trust has only deepened at the national level, evident in bold calls such as Surya's elevation to T20 captaincy and clearly defined roles for the squad.

ISL Transfer: Samba flavour Chennai rope in Eduardo Kau

Brazilian centre-back adds height, composure and experience, strengthening Chennaiyin's defence as the club reshapes its evolving backline unit

CHENNAI

Two-time Indian Super League champions Chennaiyin FC have strengthened their backline with the signing of Brazilian defender Eduardo Kau, as the Marina Machans continue to fine-tune their squad ahead of the new season starting February 14.

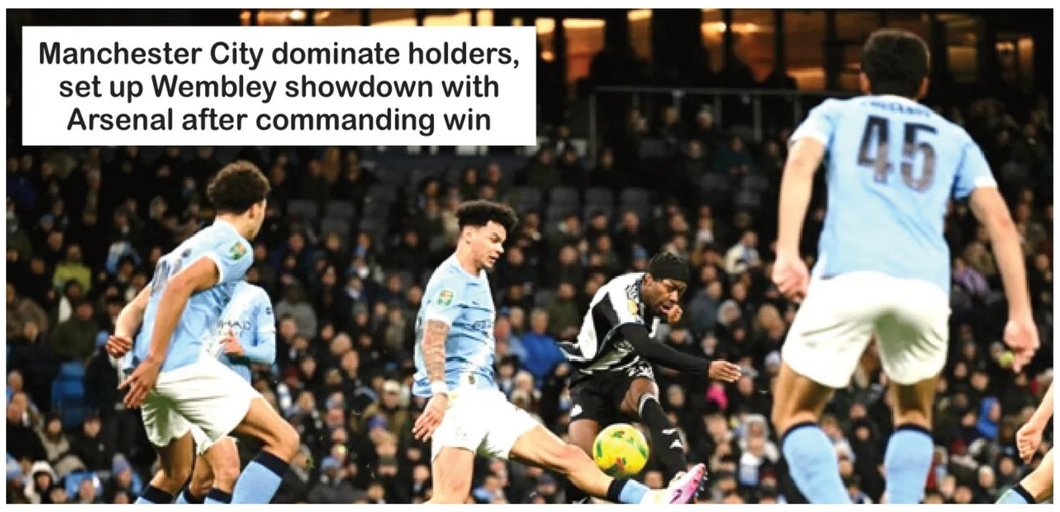
The 27-year-old has signed a contract until the end of the campaign and becomes Chennaiyin's fifth new recruit in the current transfer window. A left-footed centre-back, Kau brings both physical presence and tactical flexibility to the side. Standing at 6'3", the Brasilia-born defender is dominant in aerial duels and strong in one-on-one situations, while also capable of slotting in as a left-back when required.

Kau's profile fits the modern defender mould. Comfortable on the ball, he is known for carrying possession out of defence, breaking opposition lines with accurate forward passes and switching play with well-weighted long balls. His composure under pressure is expected to add stability to Chennaiyin's build-up play from the back.

Head coach Clifford Miranda expressed satisfaction at the club securing the Brazilian's services, stressing the balance Kau brings to the defensive unit. "We're happy Eduardo has joined us. He's calm on the ball and very comfortable under pressure. Along with Elsinho, he will help us shore up our defence and initiate attacks from the back. His leadership qualities will also be important in controlling the game," Miranda said.

Kau began his professional career with Avaí in Brazil before moving to Europe, where he featured in Portugal's top division with B-SAD. He has since gathered valuable international experience across Moldova, Indonesia, Malta and Thailand, adapting to different playing styles and tactical demands.

His arrival also extends Chennaiyin FC's long-standing association with Brazilian footballers, a tradition that has brought flair and steel to the club over the years. Kau joins recent signings Imran Khan and Alberto Noguera as Chennaiyin aim to assemble a balanced, competitive squad for the upcoming ISL season.



Manchester City dominate holders, set up Wembley showdown with Arsenal after commanding win

Man City brush aside Newcastle to reach League Cup final

MANCHESTER

Manchester City booked their place in the English League Cup final with a commanding 3-1 win over Newcastle United at the Etihad Stadium, sealing a 5-1 aggregate victory and ending the Magpies' reign as defending champions.

Already holding a first-leg advantage from their January win on Tyneside, Pep Guardiola's side wasted little time asserting control in the second leg. City's sharp movement, quick transitions and clinical finishing proved too much for a Newcastle team that struggled to cope with the early intensity.

Omar Marmoush was the standout performer, striking twice in the first half to put the tie firmly beyond Newcastle's reach. The Egyptian opened the scoring in the seventh minute when a last-ditch tackle from Dan Burn ricocheted off him and looped into the net. Marmoush doubled City's advantage midway through the half, reacting quickest to head home from close range after Kieran Trippier failed to clear Antoine Semenyo's cross.

City struck again just minutes later through Tijjani Reijnders, who finished off a slick counter-attack with a composed low drive after exchanging passes with Semenyo. Newcastle, rattled by the pace and precision of City's play, found themselves chasing shadows for much of the opening period.

Anthony Elanga pulled one back for the visitors in the 62nd minute with a fine solo effort, but it proved little more than a consolation as City comfortably saw out the remainder of the match.

The victory sets up a mouth-watering final against Arsenal at Wembley on March 22, after the Premier League leaders knocked out Chelsea in the other semi-final. It will be City's first League Cup final appearance since 2021.

For Guardiola, the result offered timely relief following recent league frustrations and reinforced his belief in the squad's ability to compete for silverware. Newcastle manager Eddie Howe, meanwhile, admitted his side fell short in the decisive first half, as City's ruthless efficiency once again underlined their pedigree on the big stage.

Stoppage-time drama lifts Basque rivals into last four after tense quarterfinal clashes

Athletic Bilbao, Real Sociedad score late reach semifinals

MADRID

Athletic Bilbao and Real Sociedad struck late to book their places in the semifinals of the Copa del Rey, with dramatic victories away from home keeping the Basque rivals firmly in contention for silverware.

Athletic Bilbao edged past Valencia 2-1 thanks to a stoppage-time winner from Iñaki Williams, sealing their sixth Copa semifinal appearance in seven seasons. Williams struck six minutes into added time, finishing clinically with his left foot from close range after a swift breakaway and a perfectly weighted cross from his younger brother, Nico Williams.

The victory came amid a tense backdrop for Athletic. Spanish media reported that objects were thrown at the team bus before kickoff, while a mural depicting the

Williams brothers in Bilbao was recently vandalised, reflecting simmering discontent among sections of fans. On the pitch, however, Athletic showed resilience after a difficult run of form.

The visitors had taken the lead in the 26th minute when Valencia forward Umar Sadiq scored an own-goal, only to redeem himself nine minutes later by levelling for the hosts. Athletic endured further frustration when Mikel Jauregizar missed a penalty in the 75th minute, but Iñaki Williams' late heroics ensured progression.

Real Sociedad also needed a late goal to prevail, winning 3-2 at Alaves to reach the semifinals for a third straight season. Young Icelandic striker Orri Oskarsson netted the decisive goal in the 80th minute, maintaining Sociedad's impressive recent run.

Alaves struck first through Abde Rebbach in the eighth minute, before Mikel Oyarzabal equalised. Toni Martínez restored Alaves' lead from the spot in the 29th minute, but missed another penalty later in the contest. Gonçalo Guedes brought Sociedad level in the 76th minute before Oskarsson settled the tie.

On Tuesday, Barcelona advanced with a 2-1 win over second-division Albacete.

AFC confirm India among six bidders to host 2031 Asian Cup

NEW DELHI

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has confirmed that India is among six bidders seeking the hosting rights for the 2031 AFC Asian Cup, as the country eyes staging the continent's premier international football tournament for the first time.

Despite failing to qualify for the 2027 Asian Cup and enduring a difficult phase on and off the pitch, Indian football has received a potential boost with the All-India Football Federation (AIFF) formally entering the race. In a statement issued this week, the AFC said the AIFF has submitted an expression of interest alongside football associations from Indonesia, Kuwait, South Korea and Australia. The sixth bid is a joint proposal from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

India have never hosted the AFC Asian Cup, with West Asian nations dominating recent editions. Qatar hosted the 2023 tournament, where India exited at the group stage, while Saudi Arabia will stage the 2027 edition as a prelude to hosting the 2034 FIFA World Cup. The Asian Cup is widely viewed as a marker of a nation's footballing stature and organisational capability on the continental stage.

For India, securing the 2031 hosting rights could serve as a unifying objective at a time when the sport is under scrutiny and grappling with administrative and performance-related challenges. The tournament would also provide a long-term roadmap for infrastructure development and grassroots engagement.

Defending champions India lose 2-3 to Thailand but qualify for BATC quarterfinals

QINGDAO

Young Tanvi Sharma delivered a standout performance, but defending champions India suffered a narrow 2-3 defeat against Thailand in their second Group Y tie of the Badminton Asia Team Championships here on Thursday. Despite the loss, India secured qualification for the quarterfinals, finishing second in the group behind Thailand.

India had started their campaign in dominant fashion with a 5-0 win over Myanmar on Wednesday, and needed only a competitive showing to progress. They appeared on course for another victory after taking an early 2-0 lead against a strong Thai side at the Qingdao Conson Gymnasium.

World No. 42 Tanvi, part of India's historic gold medal-winning squad in the 2024 edition, set the tone with a

superb win over world No. 16 Busanan Ongbamrungphan. The teenager displayed remarkable composure and control to prevail 21-14, 17-21, 21-18 in a gripping contest that lasted one hour and three minutes.

India extended their advantage when the women's doubles pair of Gayatri Gopichand and Treesa Jolly overcame Tidapron Kleebyeesun and Nattamon Laisuan 21-14, 20-22, 21-11 to make it 2-0.

Thailand, however, mounted a strong comeback. Rakshitha Ramraj was beaten 19-21, 17-21 by 19-year-old Pitchamon Opatniputh, the 2023 world junior champion, as the Thai side reduced the deficit. The second doubles saw Tanisha Crasto and Shruti Mishra fight hard before losing 21-19, 14-21, 15-21 to Hathaithip Mijad and Napapakorn Tungkasatan, leveling the tie at 2-2.

In the decisive fifth match, Malvika Bansod was unable to halt Thailand's momentum, going down 18-21, 14-21 to Pornpicha Choeikeewong in the final singles.

Though the defending champions fell short on the day, India's overall performance ensured a place in the knockout stage, keeping their title defence alive.

IOC elects Iran's first female member

MILAN

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has elected Soraya Aghaei as its first female member from Iran, marking a historic milestone for the country and for gender representation within the global Olympic movement.

Aghaei was voted in by an overwhelming 95–2 margin during the 145th IOC Session in Milan, becoming the 107th member of the prestigious body. She is only the third Iranian to join the IOC and the first since 2004, while also emerging as the youngest current representative. The election underlined the IOC's evolving profile under its first female president, Kirsty Coventry, with women now accounting for 45 per cent of total membership. Aghaei's induction was formalised during an oath ceremony ahead of the 2026 Winter Olympics.

The 30-year-old former Olympic badminton player will serve an eight-year term, during which she will have voting rights on major decisions, including the selection of the host city for the 2036 Summer Olympic Games.

Aghaei competed at the Tokyo Olympics in 2021, becoming Iran's first female badminton player at the Games. She is currently a member of the Iranian Olympic Committee's athletes' commission, reflecting the IOC's emphasis on athlete representation and generational renewal.

Esha makes golden return, Samrat captures bronze at Asian Shooting Championships

CHENNAI

Esha Singh marked a memorable return to top form by clinching gold in the women's 10m air pistol, while reigning world champion Samrat Rana bagged a bronze medal in the men's event on the opening day of the Asian Shooting Championships.

Competing in a tense, high-pressure final, the Hyderabad shooter showed remarkable composure after a cautious start to outgun two rivals from Chinese Taipei. Esha finished with an impressive total of 239.8 to secure the top spot, claiming her second individual gold medal of the continental meet. Cheng Yen-Ching of Chinese Taipei, who remained in contention till the final shots, faltered at the end with two low scores and had to settle for silver, while compatriot Ai-Wen Yu took bronze.

The women's final proved to be a nerve-racking affair, with pressure clearly taking its toll on several shooters. Olympic medallist Manu Bhaker struggled to find consistency and was the second shooter to be eliminated in the eight-woman final, eventually finishing seventh. Suruchi Singh, the third Indian finalist, began strongly but could not maintain her momentum during the elimination rounds and narrowly missed out on a medal, finishing fourth.

In the men's 10m air pistol final, Samrat Rana had to be content with bronze after a slow start hampered his chances of challenging for gold. Uzbekistan's Vladimir Svechnikov emerged victorious, edging past compatriot Valeriy Rakhimzhan in a closely fought contest. Rana recovered well in the latter stages to secure a podium finish, adding another international medal to his résumé.

Shravan Kumar, the second Indian in the men's final, put up a creditable performance but fell just short of the podium, finishing fourth.

Olympic champion says medical supervision ensured compliance, insists differences are natural

Khelif details hormone treatment, rejects transgender allegations

PARIS

Olympic boxing champion Imane Khelif has revealed that she underwent hormone treatments to lower her testosterone levels ahead of the Paris 2024 Olympics, while firmly reiterating that she is not transgender. The 26-year-old Algerian, who won gold in the women's 66kg category, spoke about her medical journey.

Khelif said she has female hormones but acknowledged that she possesses the SRY gene, located on the Y chromosome, which is associated with male biological development. "Yes, and it's natural," she said, adding that her condition has been closely monitored by medical professionals. "I am surrounded by doctors, a professor is monitoring me. For the Paris Games qualifying tournament in Dakar, I lowered my testosterone levels to zero."

Her triumph at the Paris Games was overshadowed by a gender eligibility controversy that also involved Taiwanese boxer Lin Yu-ting, another gold medallist. The issue drew global attention, with comments from US President Donald Trump and author J.K. Rowling amplifying the debate.

"I respect everyone, and I respect Trump because he is the President of the United States," Khelif said. "But he cannot distort the truth. I am not a trans woman. I am a girl. I was raised as a girl, I grew up as a girl, and everyone in my village has always known me as a girl."

Looking ahead, Khelif said she is prepared to comply with mandatory gender testing introduced by World Boxing, the body recognised by the International Olympic Committee. "If I have to take a test for the next Games, I will. I have no problem," she said, adding that she has already submitted her medical records and hormone test results to the organisation.

Khelif, who has not competed since Paris after being barred from a tournament in the Netherlands due to the new chromosome testing rules, said she is awaiting a French professional boxing licence.

While viewing the professional ranks as a "logical next step," she made it clear that her Olympic ambitions remain intact.

"I want to become the first person in Algerian sport to successfully defend an Olympic title," she said.

KUM. SHREYA MAHESH'S RANGAPRAVESHA

India is rich in art, literature, dance, and culture: Justice Gopala Gowda

India is one of the richest countries in the world when it comes to art, literature, dance, and cultural values, said Justice Gopala Gowda, retired judge of the Supreme Court of India.

He was speaking after inaugurating the Rangapravesha (debut performance) of Kumari Shreya Mahesh, daughter of advocate R. Mahesh and Asha, at Chowdiah Memorial Hall, Malleswaram.

He noted that while the country may not be rich in several other sectors, India has never lagged behind in art and culture. This, he said,

is the nation's true pride.

Bharatanatyam is an art form that was nurtured and blossomed on Indian soil. Kumari Shreya gave an outstanding dance performance. Artistic presentations, he added, create a pleasant atmosphere for the mind, free from stress and sorrow. On this occasion, several organizations honored the talented Kumari Shreya.

Those present at the program included Additional Advocate Kiran V. Rao, senior civil judge Nivedita, Yogamitra Dr. A. Subrahmanyan, Dharani Kashyap, Dr. Suparna Venkatesh, advocate A. P. Ranganath, and Geetaraj.

Screening of Mahakavi at the Film Festival

At the 17th Bengaluru International Film Festival, the 25th film directed by Baraguru Ramachandrappa was screened.

The film Mahakavi, produced by Prabhu Yatnatti of Belagavi under the banner P.R. Associates and directed by Dr. Baraguru Ramachandrappa, was screened at the 17th Bengaluru International Film Festival. After the screening, members of the film team addressed the media at a press conference.

Producer Prabhu spoke first: "I am a lawyer by profession and hail from Belagavi. Through a friend, I got introduced to Baraguru Ramachandrappa. He narrated the story of Mahakavi to me, and I liked it. Within a few days, the shooting began. Now the film is ready

and has been screened at this year's Bengaluru International Film Festival. We are very happy that our film has been selected for the festival. We are planning to release the film in April, not only in Kannada but also in other languages."

Actress Anusha Rai said that acting as the heroine in her guru Baraguru Ramachandrappa's 25th directorial film, and having the film screened at the Bengaluru International Film Festival, have both brought her immense happiness.

Actor Rajappa Dalavayi explained that Mahakavi is based on the works of Pampa, who is renowned as the first poet of Kannada literature. "This is not a biographical film about Pampa's life. Instead, it is a visual interpretation of Pampa's concepts. The ideas propounded by the great poet Pampa in his poetry have been given a narrative form. Baraguru Ramachandrappa has written the screenplay and dialogues and directed the film. Kishore has played the role of Pampa," he said.

Cinematographer Nagaraj Adavani shared, "Of the 25 films directed by Baraguru Ramachandrappa, including this one, I have worked as the cinematographer for 18 films."

Samyuktha performs real stunts without dupe support

Actress Samyuktha is stepping into a bold new phase of her career with the upcoming action-packed drama The Black Gold. The actress is reportedly going the extra mile by performing several intense action sequences on her own, without relying on a body double. During the shoot, she even sustained bruises and minor injuries, highlighting the physical demands of the role.

According to sources close to the production, Samyuktha was determined to execute the stunts herself to maintain realism and do full justice to her character. Despite the physical strain and exhaustion, she continued filming without taking extended breaks, earning admiration and praise from the director and crew for her dedication and professionalism. These high-octane action sequences are expected to stand out as one of the film's major highlights.

This daring move comes at a crucial point in Samyuktha's career. After facing disappointment with Akhanda 2, which failed to live up to expectations, she made a strong comeback with Nari Nari Naduma Murari, which turned out to be a success and restored her momentum. She is now also awaiting the release of Swayambhu, another key project that could further elevate her standing.

The Black Gold is directed by Yogesh KMC and produced by Rajesh Danda under the Hasya Movies banner, in association with Maganti Pictures.

Mirzapur The Movie locks official release date

Mirzapur The Movie is shaping up to be one of the most exciting theatrical releases to emerge from the OTT space. Riding on the immense popularity of the hit web series, the makers have transformed the crime drama into a full-fledged feature film bearing the same title. The filming has been completed, and the team has officially locked the release date. The movie is slated to arrive in cinemas on September 4, 2026, with a striking poster revealed to mark the announcement. The film stars Pankaj Tripathi, Ali Fazal, Divyenndu Sharma, Sonal Chauhan, along with several other familiar faces from the franchise. Directed by Gurmmeet Singh, the project is backed by Farhan Akhtar and Ritesh Sidhwani under the Excel Entertainment banner, in association with Amazon MGM Studios.

Eesha Rebba files complaint over online obscene abuse

Telugu actress Eesha Rebba, recently seen in Om Shanti Shanti Shantihi, approached the Banjara Hills Police Station in Hyderabad after receiving obscene and abusive comments on her Instagram account. She filed a formal written complaint, stating that the online abuse went beyond casual trolling and was deeply offensive. The harassment occurred during promotions for her latest Telugu film, with comments publicly visible, causing her stress and discomfort.

The complaint identifies a person managing a social media page that shared sexually explicit and derogatory content targeting her. The posts were described as defamatory and degrading, attacking her dignity as a woman. Authorities noted that online abuse can cause emotional distress, public humiliation, and anxiety.

Following the complaint, Banjara Hills Police began investigating to identify the individual responsible. Officers are reviewing social media content and collecting digital evidence. Police emphasized that online harassment is serious and urged social media users to avoid insulting or demeaning others. Eesha Rebba has not yet commented publicly on the matter.

Mrunal blushes over Chennai Waala remark

Mrunal Thakur and Siddhant Chaturvedi are currently occupied with promotional activities for their upcoming Hindi film Do Deewane Seher Mein. During one such event, a candid and playful exchange caught everyone's attention and quickly became a talking point online. While interacting with the media, a reporter mentioned "Chennai" while directing a question at Siddhant.

Instead of responding, Siddhant humorously suggested that the question should be answered by Mrunal. His remark instantly left Mrunal blushing, prompting laughter from Siddhant and others on stage, and drawing loud cheers from the audience. The lighthearted moment stood out during the promotions and was widely shared across social media platforms.

The "Chennai Waala" comment gained further traction as it comes amid ongoing online speculation linking Mrunal Thakur with Tamil star Dhanush. Although neither Mrunal nor Dhanush has addressed the rumours, the incident added fresh fuel to the chatter and intensified fan curiosity.

Recent reports have been buzzing with talk of a possible connection between the two actors, but no official confirmation has surfaced so far.

Dahaad 2 filming starts with Sonakshi Sinha, Gulshan Devaiah returning

The much-anticipated second season of Dahaad is officially moving forward, with Sonakshi Sinha and Gulshan Devaiah set to reprise their roles as police officers. Created by Zoya Akhtar and Reema Kagti, the acclaimed crime drama is preparing to return with a new investigation and deeper, darker storytelling. According to reports, filming for Dahaad 2 is scheduled to begin this month, with Rajasthan once again serving as the primary shooting location.

Nearly three years after the first season premiered in 2023, the makers are ready to expand the series' gripping narrative. Rajasthan's stark

landscapes and small-town atmosphere, which played a crucial role in shaping the mood of the first season, are expected to feature prominently again, adding further depth to the story. Vijay Varma is also reportedly set to return, further strengthening the core cast.

Sources suggest that Prime Video is backing the second season on a larger scale, encouraged by the strong critical and audience response to the debut instalment. While details about the storyline and release date remain under wraps, excitement around the project continues to grow.

The first season of Dahaad, which revolved around the investigation into the disappearance of 27 women in a Rajasthan village, received widespread acclaim and made history as the first Indian streaming series to premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival. With filming about to commence, Dahaad 2 is expected to raise the stakes even higher.

Andrea's Kaa - The Forest gets release date

After years of delays, Andrea Jeremiah's adventure-thriller Kaa – The Forest has finally locked a theatrical release. The makers shared a new motion poster announcing that the film will hit cinemas on February 13, just ahead of Valentine's Day. Originally launched in 2018, Kaa was extensively shot in dense forest locations. Written and directed by Nanjil, the film is produced by John Max under the Shalom Studios banner. The late actor Salim Ghouse plays the antagonist, marking his final on-screen appearance.

City Hilights (English Daily) published by P. Sunil Kumar (Publisher) on behalf of Immaculate Broadcasting Consortium World News (P) Ltd., No. 18, JRV Court, Queens's Road, Bengaluru – 560001 and printed at Manipal Media Network Limited Opp. Govt School, Kempalinganahalli, Near Kunigal Cross, Nelamangala TQ, Bangalore Rural Dist. -562123, Printed at No-7/2 plot no.CA-3/1,28(p)&29(p) Kapanoor 2nd Stage Industrial Area Kapnoor Village Kalaburagi -585104. Printed at S. J. R. V. Printers, No. 208 Plot No. B-019 KSSIDC Industrial Area, Irfan Ahamed Khan Pathan, 4th Main Road Gamanagatti, Hubballi-Dharwad – 580025. and Elegant Offset Printers Pvt. Ltd. No. 5-61/1, Shed No. M-6, Yeyyadi Industrial Estate, Yeyyadi, Mangalore - 575 008. (RNI No: KARENG / 2015 / 63243), Regd. No. BGGPO-2581/2017-2019 Posted at Bengaluru PSO-560026 Email - cityhilights.news@gmail.com Phone: 080-41209042. Copyright. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is prohibited.